The roots and uses of marketing knowledge: A critical inquiry into the theory and practice of marketing.

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Chester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Terence David Smith

1st September 2018

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Abbreviations

AoM	Academy of Marketing
B2B	Business-to-Business
CAQDAS	Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software
CIM	Chartered Institute of Marketing
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FE	Further Education
FSB	Federation of Small Businesses
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
KT	Knowledge Transfer
KTP	Knowledge Transfer Partnership
KM	Knowledge Management
MSI	Marketing Science Institute
M1K	Theoretical knowledge
M2K	Knowledge in use
NSS	National Student Survey
MkIS	Marketing Information System
MIS	Management Information System
PG	Post-Graduate
NVivo	Qualitative data analysis software
PE	Post-Experience
PBS	Practice Based Studies
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RM	Relationship Marketing

SECI model	Socialisation Externalisation Combination and Internalisation
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
UG	Under-Graduate

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Declaration

The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis. Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my individual contribution has been made explicit.

Signed……. Date…….

Terence David Smith

Word count: (excluding copies of transcripts in Appendices) 97,994

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"Of the many marketing constituencies, the dominant discourse may be with the academy, but the hegemony is gravitating towards recognition of contextual marketing meaning. The long-established paradigm which shapes the planning and teaching of marketing is under threat from both an academic point of view and from the contextual practitioner world of *ad hoc* application".

(Smith *et al*, 2015:5)

Abstract

This thesis engages with the vital conversation about the nature, roots and uses of marketing knowledge, looking beyond the traditional reification of practice in theory and verification of theory in practice, making an original and imaginative contribution to marketing in the conceptualisation and creation of an integrative ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model.***

The ontology of this study is anchored in subjective individual meaning; the epistemological stance assumes that this meaning is socially constructed, grounded in context. Consequently, rich empirical data extracted from a comprehensive range of marketing constituencies - academics, practitioners, managers, consultants, authors, lecturers and students - are analysed in the interpretive paradigm using a phenomenological methodology with grounded theory data capture and thematic analysis.

In its examination of the polarities, hybridity and iterative flow of marketing knowledge creation and consumption, the framework which has evolved presents a unique perspective on the ideologically-driven power relations implicit in the theory/practice dichotomy debate. In place of duality, this new scholarly structure, and its accompanying argument, adds valuable insights into the theoretical, practical and pedagogical representation of marketing and introduces a feasible, holistic perspective created in marketing praxis which posits a cohesive argument for a theory/practice bipartite fusion not dichotomy.

Section One Introduction

1 *Chapter One* Introduction

1.1 Outline of chapter

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to delineate the origins and key dynamics of this inquiry – *the roots and uses of marketing knowledge* – and outline the justification for and explanation of: the origins and background of the study; proposed analysis of the landscape within which this debate has taken and is taking place; the scope and aims of research; methodological approach adopted; expected results and original contribution to the production of marketing knowledge; how the thesis is structured; as well as providing a discussion on the need for personal and disciplinary reflexivity. Whilst it is prefatory to the substance of the content, this opening chapter it will provide essential context and dynamic to its discussion.

1.2 Brief introduction

Lewin's famous (1951:169) aperçu "There is nothing so practical as a good theory" (sic) locates the source of knowledge as directly traceable to academe and targeted squarely at the context of practice: marketing knowledge in practice is reified in theory; marketing theory is verified in practice. Whilst "practice is not entirely thoughtless, and thought is often practice-driven" (Hollander (1989: xix), it is very difficult at times to determine whether marketing knowledge is derived from, or driven by, marketing theory or marketing practice. Practice often has *tacit* knowledge which is not expressed as theory; theory often has *explicit* knowledge not related to practice. This is exactly the locus and, indeed, the focus of this thesis: an emic and etic inquiry into *the roots and uses of marketing knowledge*.

Discussion on the theory/practice conundrum has been going on for some considerable time now. In the case of applied fields, "it appears that the practices related to the phenomenon of knowledge management and knowledge creation have accelerated faster than the scholarly work to explain them" (McLean, 2004:1). Previous investigations into the 'theory-practice conundrum' polarises those that claim research can offer managerially useful insights (Elliott and Jankell-Elliott, 2003) and those, like Holbrook (1985) and Cayla and Eckhardt (2008), who claim that research is an end in itself and therefore may not be directed at practitioners.

Theory often doesn't reflect practice; accounts of extant knowledge may not always be comprehensive. Marketing knowledge is either a product of marketplace dynamics, theoretical observation and speculation, or a mixture of both. Theory is often developed in isolation not

collaboration; theoretical perspectives sometimes are ignorant of the diversity of marketing practice, evident in "the micro-discourses and narratives that marketing actors draw upon to represent their work" (Ardley and Quinn, 2014:97). Indeed, Triana (2009) describes theoretical observation - the distanced relationship between academics and practitioners - as "lecturing birds on flying". The separation gap is somewhere in the spaces between rigidity 'in aspic' and dynamism 'in situ', between rigour and relevance, theory and practice, and between *a posteriori* and *a priori* knowledge (Smith *et al*, 2015:1029). Normative perspectives frame theory and practice as being in problematic binary opposition.

It was Aristotle who separated theory and practice, distinguishing *thinking* and *doing*. But can there be *practice* without a theory of practice? Isn't *thinking* a form of practice in itself? Whilst there may not be a perfect fusion between empirical and philosophical evaluations of marketing, the synthesis of theory and practice – praxis – offers a perspective approaching a *rapprochement*. Praxis, according to Heilman, (2003:274) can be described as "a synthetic product of the dialectic between theory and practice" and, in this respect, praxis is both the fulcrum and essence of this inquiry: an examination of what constitutes 'knowledge'.

The value of knowledge, and indeed how knowledge is consumed, is a principal epistemological quality and consideration. The purpose of this inquiry, set in the interpretive paradigm, is to investigate the "the meaning of social action in the context of the life-world and from the actors' perspective" (de Gialdino, 1992:43). The focus in the title of this thesis – the roots and uses of marketing knowledge – is purposively in the plural as there are many ways in which knowledge is used – functionally, practically, philosophically, pedagogically, as utility, symbolically, as a source of power, identity, even egotistically - and the scope of the ontological investigation covers different types of marketing knowledge as well as different types of marketing constituents. However, in the tradition of hermeneutic inquiry, this will be a mereological approach, in the sense that a study of the parts (types of knowledge and types of constituents) will be examined in relation to the whole: the macro perspective aided by the micro contextual insights.

Marketing evidences a chimerical confusion of disparate yet connected narratives: as a key social phenomenon; a prescriptive managerial framework; and as a subject for intense pedagogical scrutiny. Whether business practice, applied discipline or social institution, marketing is characterised by reciprocity, inter-relatedness, and symbolic symbiosis. It is often

presented as a meta-narrative, 'a narrative about narratives' (Hunt, 1994). It is the intention of this thesis to analyse and integrate these divergent and convergent strands by presenting all of these narratives: theoretical, empirical and pedagogical.

1.3 Original contribution to marketing knowledge and expected results

Whilst this thesis is a submission towards doctoral recognition, it is also an exercise in dialectical reasoning: a statement of applied theory to be considered as a significant contribution to marketing knowledge. Gummesson (2004:3) describes knowledge as a blend of three interacting elements: the process of knowing (methodology); the knower (the researcher) and, the known (the results). Marketing is not a *tabula rasa* with an absence of preconceived ideas, but a *palimpsest* which bears the traces of previous knowledge and expressions of practice. Marketing knowledge as practiced in the marketplace is often reified as innovative theory and sometimes the validity of academic claims to authenticity can be questioned.

Often, in researching marketing phenomena, it is not just what you see but what you don't see which gives the insight. The contribution to knowledge submitted in this thesis – a unique perspective on the theory/practice duality, encapsulated in the ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model*** comprehensively explained in *Chapter 9 Conclusions* – whilst not originary is original. The model evolves from rich data extracted from a broad range of marketing constituencies, and captures the polarities, the hybridity and the iterative flow of marketing knowledge creation and consumption. This exciting new framework, and its accompanying argument, will add to the critical discourse of marketing in theory, practice and pedagogy and presents a feasible, practical perspective which posits a dyadic fusion of theory and practice in place of duality.

Implicit in this contribution are the following outcomes in relation to the production and use of marketing knowledge:

(i) Additional critical insights into the production and dissemination of marketing knowledge.

(ii) Augmentation of disciplinary reflexivity in terms of a critical appraisal of discursive elements of this knowledge production.

(iii) Deeper ethnographic perspective of the situated learning environment of the practitioner.

(iv) Proposals for bridging the assumed academic/practitioner divide.

(v) Explanatory model showing divergence and convergence of marketing knowledge domains and dynamics of knowledge production.

(vi) Suggestions for a better pedagogical fit of curriculum to promote employment-enhanced hybrid 'pracademics'.

1.4 Scope of the inquiry: aims, assumptions, delimitations, and gaps in knowledge

As Saunders *et al,* (2012) implore, the importance of defining clear research questions at the beginning of the process cannot be over-emphasised. Expected results are directed by the aims and assumptions made within the scope of the inquiry. It is important, therefore, at the outset of this inquiry to justify the scope and boundaries of research – the delimitations of the study – so that the reader can appreciate the focus of investigation and analysis from hereon in.

This inquiry will argue that evidence should be grounded in the experience of practitioners and academics. The theoretical perspective is firmly anchored in a qualitative interpretative methodology; the methods are fixed in grounded theory. In as much as it is possible, findings will emerge from the extant theoretical and practical findings and contribute to marketing knowledge as part of a broad and on-going discourse or discourses of which, at one stage or another, the author has inhabited and contributed to.

Whilst the author has a varied range of conceptual marketing experience in many marketing subject areas, the focus is firmly on **the theory and practice of marketing**. All research is based on assumptions, and yet whilst "assumptions are so basic, without them, the research problem itself could not exist" (Leedy and Ormrod:2010:20). The essential premises here are that the commitment and experiences of a comprehensive range of marketing constituencies will provide meaningful rich data and offer unique insight into the theory and practice of marketing.

In this inquiry, understanding *per se* as well as understanding *for use* will be thoroughly addressed. This is informed by the author's insider understanding of the phenomenon being studied, developed through expert knowledge of the subject matter, practical experience of the dynamics and the long-term relationships developed with key participants within their particular marketing domains.

It is also based on upholding the highest levels of ethical research in terms of anonymity and confidentiality to ensure honest but insightful empirical evidence.

The overall aims are framed in a broad canvas but with a disciplined focus:

1. To conduct a critical examination of the dynamics of marketing practice and marketing theory.

2. To evaluate its relevance and applicability in a pedagogical context.

The objectives are concentrated on four key areas:

i. To evaluate the epistemological bases and values of what constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice and critically analyse perceived and actual disconnects between these two epistemes.

ii. To analyse the explicit and implicit impact of various marketing constituencies (creation, distribution, observation and consumption) on the production of marketing knowledge.

iii. To make recommendations for developing better knowledge partnerships between academics and practitioners.

Consequently, it is assumed that the results of this inquiry will have a major contribution to the theoretical conceptualisation of marketing practice and have relevant impact on marketing pedagogy. It is hoped that the disparate and divided literature on this matter is reconciled with a holistic view of theory and practice arguing not just for separation but synthesis and what emerges is as Deighton and Narayandas (2004:19) suggest all solid academic work should have: the inductive development of theory from phenomena closely observed and thickly described".

1.5 **Requirements of Doctoral research**

Doctoral research requires the original contribution of applied and new knowledge resulting from a systematic investigation and interpretation of a substantial body of knowledge – both philosophical and subject specific – related to a chosen area of theory and practice. A PhD is more than a route to achieving instrumental values of identity and behaviour or acquiring the terminal values of status and end-goal achievement; it is a commitment to a transformative,

educative practice. It is a systematic, on-going, all-encompassing, active process of investigating and generating knowledge; "a process not just a product" (England, 1994:82). And, as Engeström (2001:138) states, in experiencing these important transformations, "we must learn new patterns of activity which are not yet there".

This describes perfectly this critical examination of marketing theory and practice: investigation, discovery, insight, contribution and transformation. It is also a reflexive one of self-understanding and self-construction (Lillis, 2001). It is intrinsic rather than extrinsic or contingent motivation which drives this programme of research, and the development of this thesis is very much part of an on-going research process. At the heart of this programme of study and investigation is Whitehead's (1932: 6) epigram: "Education is the acquisition and the art of utilisation of knowledge".

The central argument of this thesis is that it is in the practical value of knowledge in use where there is merit. An exploration of our notion of 'knowledge' must precede this inquiry into marketing knowledge. Gibbons *et al* (1994) proposed two forms of knowledge: *Mode One* and *Mode Two*. The former refers to university-created disciplinary knowledge; the latter being reflexive, trans-disciplinary and heterogeneous, a product of practice and experience. Scott *et al* (2004) compensated for what they saw as a lack of practitioner knowledge by suggesting two further 'modes': *Mode Three* which is deliberate and reflective; and *Mode Four* which is concerned with critical reflection as a form of individual development.

All these levels of knowledge acquisition and creation are present within a PhD project, but one must ask which approach is most appropriate. Is it research, investigation or inquiry? As Guba and Lincoln (1998:108) state: "*Inquiry* paradigms define for *inquirers* what it is they are about and what falls within and outside legitimate inquiry". As Cameron and Price (2009:66) make clear, addressing this question tends to reflect and reinforce our underlying philosophical preferences based on experience, perspective and contingent on context. Undertaking such an exercise as a PhD is both an academic challenge and a lifetime's reflection on practice as a marketing practitioner, writer, academic, teacher, entrepreneur and student. Throughout the work a *leit motif* is the view that understanding is as important as explanation, that meaning is socially constructed and interpretation must be situated. The need to understand objective reality construction is at the heart of what Weber referred to as 'verstehen' which means "understanding something in its context" (Holloway, 1997:2).

This is critical to this inquiry where the search for contextual understanding through personal and disciplinary reflexivity is key. Interpreting interview data, where transcripts are not necessarily 'reality' but rather texts to be subjectively scrutinised, is an essential researcher skill.

1.6 **Origins of the research**

Marketing has been described as a triad of philosophy, method and function (Morgan, 1996:19), but it is often difficult to determine whether the source or sources of marketing knowledge are experiential or theoretical. Although the need for *a posteriori* 'theory' based on scientific principles defines 'marketing' as a philosophy more than just a mere activity, prior to the theory development of marketing progressed by Jones, Fish and Hagerty between 1900-1910, it was viewed as solely an *applied*, practical phenomenon. Bartels (1970:33) captures this perfectly: "Marketing was a discovery since 'marketing is recognised as an idea and not just an activity…. Before the idea was created, the term 'marketing' was applied, the simple task had just been called 'trade', 'distribution' or 'exchange'....". And whilst it is, as Hackley (2009:643) observes, "a bifurcated discipline occupying two parallel universes", marketing is after all a discursive, integrative discipline of circular, reiterative knowledge production, often located in the situated learning or praxis of the practitioner, often in the reductionist notions of the academic. Yet despite its synthetic and integrative nature, it is a chimera composite of constituencies and constitutive elements, exposed to exogenous economic, social and even political influences (Tadajewski and Saren, 2008), and characterised by endogenous factional rather than collegiate concerns. Mittlelstaedt (1990) recognises its 'magpie' nature; Hackley (2001) identifies its 'anthropological turn'; others critique its Western world view fixation (Gould, 1991; Jack, 2008) and monotheist managerialism (Brown, 1995).

Chote (1999) railed against the myopia of this 'essentialist' academic approach claiming that it is "analysing real world behaviour in ways that are theoretically defensible but palpably absurd". Hollander's *ibid* delineation of practice not being entirely bereft of thought and thought as being often driven by practice identifies the crux of the matter. Two extreme approaches in the search for 'knowledge' – rationalism and empiricism – mark out the epistemological territory of this inquiry. Rationalism claims that there is an *a priori* existence of knowledge which is intrinsically objective are can be obtained *deductively*. Empiricism argues for *a posteriori* knowledge derived *inductively* from experience. Used as both a verb

and a noun, marketing has roots in both rational and irrational domains: the orthodox economist's obsession with perfect market equilibrium in virtual markets set against the sociologist's perspective of socially constructed meaning. It is not just about supply and demand. Nor is it just about its social nature. It is both.

Recently, research on preventing marketing from becoming marginalised and giving it legitimacy in business argues that there should be a closer integration of marketing theory and practice (Baker and Holt, 2004:564). Under the auspices of the Research Excellence Framework (née REA), the evaluation of the impact of research relevance in Higher Education describes 'impact' as "any effect, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, *beyond academia*" (REF, 2017). Whilst this warns that research should not be confined to the 'ivory towers' of the educational institution, it also infers a separation between theory and practice and yet suggests that there has to be a connection to context. Myers *et al*, (1979) draw a distinction made between "context-specific" knowledge (linked to improving business performance) and "context-free" knowledge (abstract theorising). According to Hyman and Tansey (1992:1), "Context-bound theorists assume that the historian's traditional premise that human events are unique phenomena and the historical sociologist's premise that history is composed of both unique events and evolving patterns of behaviour". Of course, this chimes perfectly well with the nature of this inquiry. The "time-and context-specific nature of interpretive research" (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988:513) makes the contextual detail the theory (Laughlin, 1995:67). In this sense, 'theory' is a narrative that explains how researchers and informants construct their worlds and the relationship between certain events and actions (Price, 2007). Here, theory is seen more as a process that involves deriving situation-relative insights that might result in analytical abstractions from the study of data-rich research contexts. The theory-practice link in this case is more complex than for positivistic research; some interpretive scholars argue that this type of research can provide managerially useful insights (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott, 2003), while others make a case for this 'scientific style' (Hirschman, 1985) to consider consumption research as an end in itself, not necessarily generating knowledge for marketing managers (Cayla and Eckhardt, 2008; Holbrook, 1985).

Hackley (2001) describes practitioner-orientation as "the precondition for the peculiar disjunction which can be seen between marketing's populist practice-preaching and the esoteric and hermetically (and hermeneutically) sealed world of academic research". There is, he

argues (*op. cit.* p.145), a view in mainstream marketing that holds that "there is a presumed theory-independent practice-language which can refer to marketing practice without referring to theory" and yet theory should be driven by real-world problems not just "pushed by a deeply naïve prescriptivism". Baker (2013: 223) asserts that "the real contribution and impact of academic work in marketing should be reflected by its adoption in practice".

Consequently, this thesis is a study of theory in practice, it is also a study of practice in theory: text into context and context into text.

Application of marketing theory to the market dynamic has not been wholesale. The discursive and tacit phenomena which constitute practice knowledge is often a fusion of competences, materials and affective engagements (Arnould, 2013:129). Brownlie and Hewer (2008), note a turn towards practice as an analytic object of management studies with sympathy growing towards research that offers richer and penetrative treatments of context and process. Bolton's (2014:1) view would support this, asserting that "explanations of marketing phenomena, like explanations in the physical sciences, inevitably raise new questions for science and practice". Shelby (1994:13), asserting that the 'job' of marketing is to apply theory to practice (eg: segmentation, positioning and diffusion), cites a failure of theory to reflect the co-operative, relationship nature of practice. Ardley (2011: 628), questioning the impact of marketing's 'grand theory' on the practitioner claims that the dominant marketing prescribed framework ignores sporadic *ad hoc* individual action and creation of meaning in organisations.

1.7 **Theoretical sensitivity**

A researcher's ability to engage with inquiry is a cumulation of experience. The search for quiddity, the essential essence of a phenomenon, is the scholar's chief task. The ability to conceptualise intellectual and practical ideas, reject erroneous academic arguments and see emerging theory in data, depends upon the researcher's sceptical eye and creative ability. And yet the objective is an objective study of a subjects' individual subjectivity! Data are subjective; they are individual's interpretation. And our interpretation of data is really *interpretation of interpretation*.

It is important to know whether we are intending to use data to test or to build theory. Theoretical sensitivity is the researcher's ability to relate data to existing models of knowledge and generate conceptual ideas from that. Theoretical sensitivity is a pre-requisite of creativity.

A perpetual, immovable presence in this process is the researcher's own view of the nature of reality – that is, 'ontology'. Fisher (2010:18) draws a distinction between 'orthodox' and 'gnostic' ontologies. Whereas an *orthodox* ontology is characterised by an agreed body of knowledge which can be objective, transparent 'truth', a *gnostic* ontology has 'truth' which is obscured, subjective with language that can be ambiguous. Sensitivity to the existence of possible 'truths' therefore must be discerned by the researcher. Ardley (2011) suggests that marketing theory is not a transferable objective technology but is constituted by the vagaries of the human agent. Engagement is personal and a highly reflexive phenomenon, reflecting an awareness of the subject matter but also of themselves. Glaser and Holton (2004:43) refer to this as "theoretical sensitivity", having the ability "to generate concepts from data and to relate them according to the normal models of theory in general, and theory *development* in particular". Theory, therefore, comes from the data, and is systematically worked out during the course of the research". In addition, theoretical sensitivity, as the founding principle of grounded theory, refers to the intellectual history of the approach to research.

This is an essential feature of this inquiry.

1.8 **Outline research methodology**

Whilst the use of empirical methods still has hegemony in certain marketing studies, there has been what Prasad (2005:3) referred to as a "qualitative turn" which provides the researcher of this subject matter with "a dazzling array of methodological choices" within the range of interpretive research approaches. Considering the polyphonic dynamic of the varied marketing constituencies to be examined in this inquiry, the unit of analysis - the phenomenon of marketing knowledge production and application – is characteristically subjective. As this research draws on a range of individual interpretations, beliefs and a multiplicity of marketing meanings, the most appropriate approach for our purposes is to seek rich data elucidated from a subjective, interpretive, qualitative approach.

Therefore, in accordance with the nature of this interpretivist inquiry, a research study aimed at generating subjective data on the phenomenon of lived marketing experience was conducted with a range of marketing authors, academics, lecturers, practitioners, students and other agencies. A systematic inductive approach, using semi-structured interviews and focus groups, was used as data collection methods.

This approach, specifically 'grounded' research, entails the researcher exposed to the field of inquiry, immersed in the data, over a long period of time. The author's immersion in the data is manifest in the author's experience as producer and consumer of marketing plans, products, pedagogies, both in text and context. Dayman and Holloway (2010:23) advocate this approach to qualitative research claiming that "being immersed in the data as a researcher aids coding and analysis". When engaging in qualitative research, as Holliday (2007:122) suggests, "the sense of argument develops through the whole process of data collection, analysis and organisation… [and] becomes very much an unfolding story". In ethnographic research, patterns and themes are identified from the emerging data "in which social actors produce, represent and contextualise experiences through narratives" (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996:54). By presenting research as a story, "we can avoid the fragmentation that is inevitable when we break down a statement into concepts and categories" (Gummesson, 2001:38). This is very much the essence of this piece of work.

Whilst secondary research in the form of an outline Literature Review in *Chapter 2 Philosophical underpinnings of the inquiry* acts as both counterpoint and foundation to the empirical research, a unique integrative approach of grounded research and hermeneutical phenomenology relating theory to practice will feature practical, academic and pedagogical perspectives. Therefore, themes from the analysis of texts will be used to link to empirical findings 'on the page', theory juxtaposed with practice, *grounded* in context-specific meaning. This is entirely consistent with Grounded Research – the main methodological approach taken – where an iterative interaction between extant literature and empirical data is essential. It is also useful and insightful too. As Charmaz (*ibid* p.39) posits: "We need to situate texts in their contexts".

This is essentially the key to this inquiry's methodology: subjective evidence in experiential context.

1.9 **Macrostructure of the thesis**

The contents of this thesis are organised to aid understanding of how the diverse elements of the inquiry link together and build cumulatively in a narrative focus towards the main contribution to knowledge: The ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model***.

This thesis is divided into 4 sections and organised into 10 chapters covering the philosophical underpinnings and theoretical approaches to reaching the roots and application of marketing knowledge - both as theorised by marketing academics and practiced by marketing practitioners - together with a comprehensive synthesis of their experiential evidence and detailing the author's contribution to marketing knowledge.

Section One Introduction

Chapter One: ***Introduction*** presents a broad overview of the structure, scope, nature and content of the thesis, stating the aims of the research and expected contributions to marketing knowledge.

Section Two: Literature review and research design

This section is in some ways an introduction rather than an exhaustive discussion on the research and subject literature upon which this inquiry sits. It is intended (in *Section Three* below) to take an integrative 'grounded research' approach where empirical data and extant theory are synthesised into formulating a new theory or perspective.

Chapter Two: ***Philosophical underpinnings for an inquiry into marketing knowledge*** discusses the theoretical foundations upon which the empirical evidence of practice is set and introduces the various and varied discourses which inform the debate and infuse the inquiry.

Chapter Three: ***Research design: objectives, methodology and methods*** presents the primary focus of the thesis in terms of aspirational aims as well as the specific, measurable outcomes expected, together with the theoretical framework within which the philosophical stance taken, target research participants and data collection methods chosen.

Section Three: Analysis and integration of findings

This section presents and analyses the extensive data capture from empirical research conducted with academics, managers, business owners, consultants, students and various providers of marketing education.

Chapter Four: ***Synopsis of findings*** presents a brief synopsis representation of findings from contextual, textual and pedagogical empirical research.

Chapter Five: ***Detailed summary of findings*** presents a more detailed summary of findings.

Chapter Six: ***Contextual Perspectives: Marketing as it is practised*** presents contextual narratives examining the generation of commercial marketing knowledge through the praxis of marketing. This chapter features a unique integration of theory applied to contextual empirical data.

Chapter Seven: ***Conceptual Perspectives: Marketing as it is theorised*** presents textual narratives analysing the production and discussion of academic extant marketing knowledge. This chapter features a unique integration of theory applied to contextual empirical data.

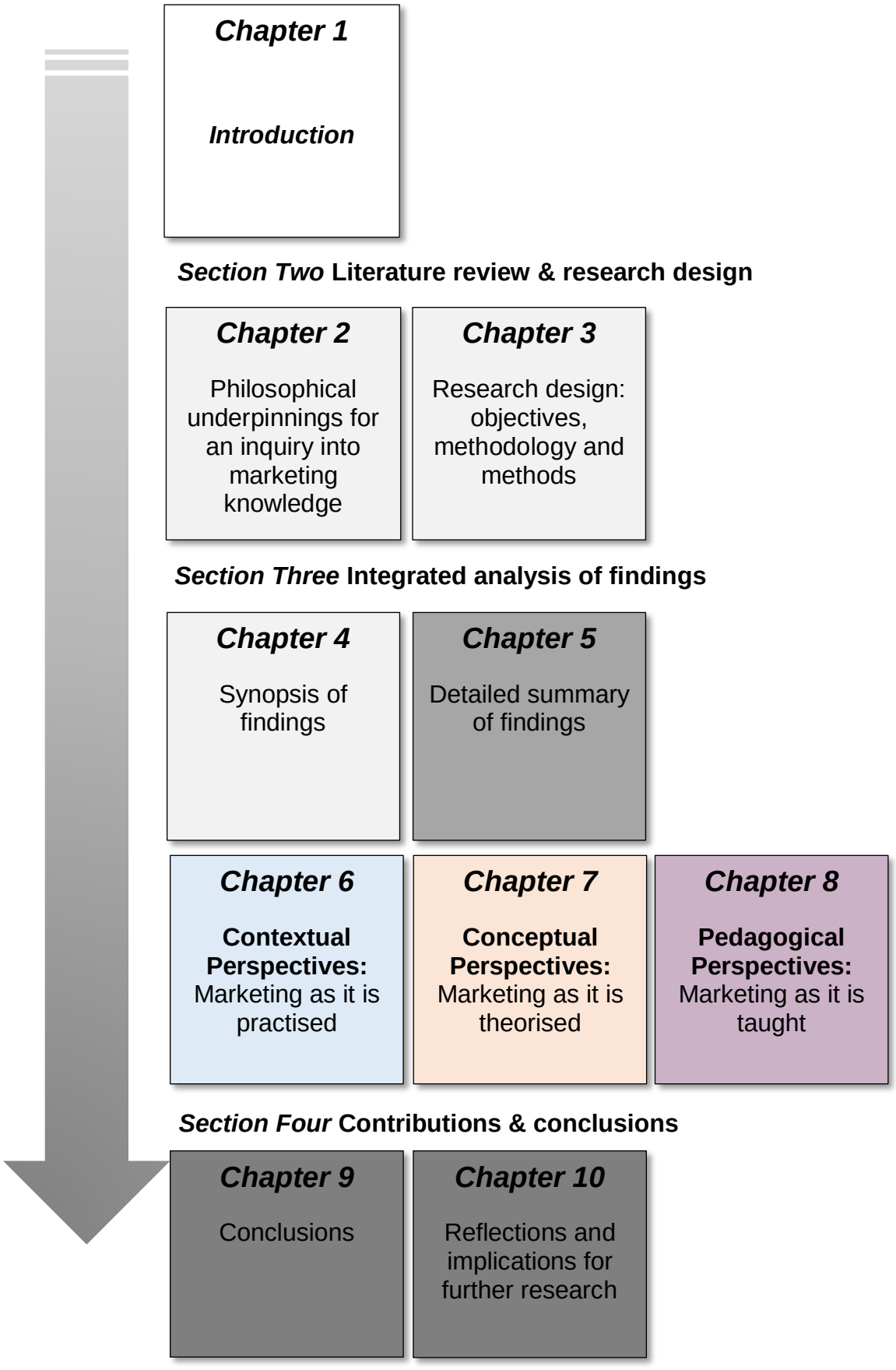
Chapter Eight: ***Pedagogical Perspectives: Marketing as it is taught*** presents pedagogical narratives evaluating the pedagogical relevance of marketing theory and practice. This chapter features a unique integration of theory applied to pedagogical empirical data.

Section Four: Contributions and conclusions

Chapter Nine: ***Conclusions*** is an evaluation of the primary research and a presentation of the author's original contributions to the field of marketing knowledge.

Chapter Ten ***Reflections and implications for further research*** is a summative, reflective evaluation of the whole PhD project and its impact on the author.

Figure 1.1 Macrostructure of the thesis



1.10 **Chapter review**

This opening chapter provided a basic outline of the structure, content and aims of this thesis. It described what is required to embark on the process of doctoral research, what motivated the author to engage in such an in-depth inquiry into the roots and uses of marketing knowledge, and what the origins of the research were. In presenting a background to the study, the need for theoretical sensitivity and critical thinking was discussed. The research problem was introduced, together with a brief plan of inquiry, a justification of research methodology and methods. The scope and limitations of the work delineated what the main focus is and what the results of the work are expected to be. This introductory chapter is an important foundation allowing the inquiry - a critical examination of the dynamics of marketing practice and marketing theory and evaluation of its relevance and applicability in a pedagogical context - to proceed, and upon which the research strategy to achieve these aims can to be built.

Section Two Literature review and research design

Introduction to Section Two: Literature review and research design

As a necessary extended pre-amble to *Section Three Research design: objectives, methodology and methods,* the purpose of *Section 2* is to describe the philosophical foundations within which the research inquiry can be framed, and from which a suitable methodology can be constructed. Drawing on extensive secondary research on the epistemological origins and ontological roots of knowledge, as well subject-specific marketing literature, this helps to "contextualise the background, identify knowledge gaps, avoid conceptual and methodological pitfalls of previous research, and provide a rationale for the study" (Giles *et al*, 2013: 39).

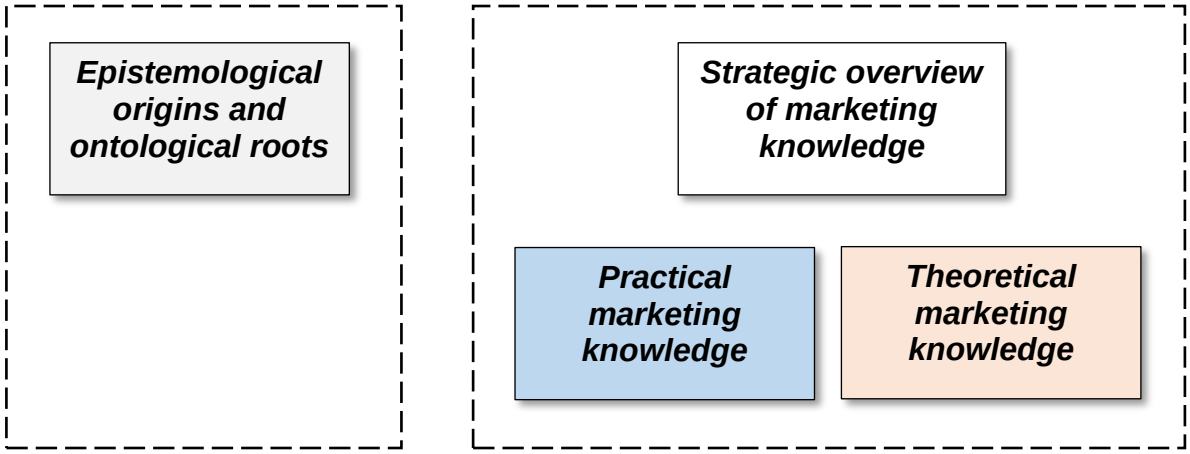
Chapter Two Philosophical underpinnings of the inquiry features an extensive literature review analysing the roots and nature of knowledge, together with a strategic overview and thorough assessment of extant marketing knowledge in both theoretical and practical domains. Theory directly related to empirical findings is integrated in *Chapters 4, 5 and 6.*

Chapter Three Research design: objectives, methodology and methods builds on this philosophical foundation and provides an in-depth review of the possible methodological direction and a justification for the one selected as most appropriate for this inquiry.

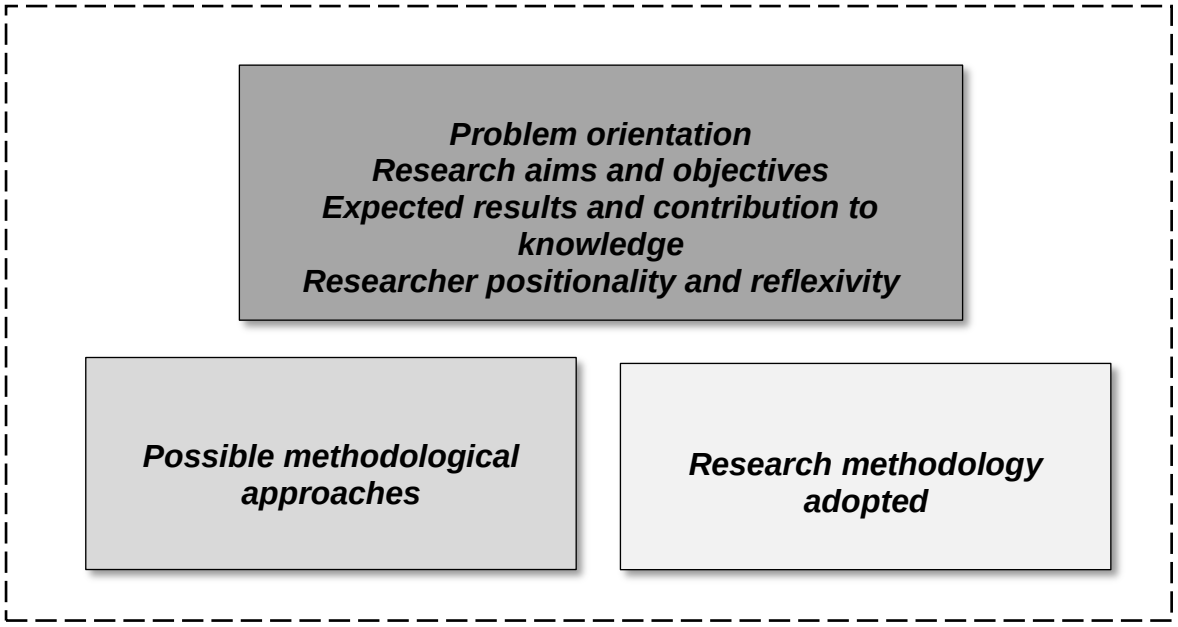
For ease of understanding, *Figure 2.1* below describes visually the microstructure of the following section.

Figure 2.1 Microstructure of Section Two Literature review and research design

Chapter Two **Philosophical underpinnings of the inquiry**



Chapter Three **Research design: objectives, methodology and methods**



2 *Chapter Two* **Philosophical underpinnings of the inquiry**

2.1 **Outline of chapter**

In the opening chapter, the aim and scope of the study, together with the framework within which this inquiry into marketing knowledge will take place, were briefly introduced. Investigating the roots and rudiments of marketing knowledge as it is *theorised*, as it is *practiced* and as it is *taught* requires a research framework which justifies researcher positionality set against the assumptions within which appropriate research methodology and methods are chosen. The theories and belief system – the research 'paradigm' – will provide a guide for how marketing 'knowledge' will be investigated as well as a framework for how the research project is to be implemented. This chapter is therefore pivotal in providing delineation and discussion on the key philosophical underpinnings which inform and structure the research undertaken in this thesis.

2.2 **Introduction**

Knowledge can be viewed from different perspectives. Indeed, researchers try to "establish the specific viewpoints from which we can apprehend reality in any way whatsoever" (Habermas, 1978:311). The use of the word 'apprehend' is interesting here. *Apprehend* suggests coming to know something in its constituent form; *comprehend* suggests embracing a more comprehensive understanding, in a fuller context and with a deeper level of meaning. Certain 'truths' may be apprehended without fully understanding them. Eliott's (1914) discourse on knowledge is apposite to this discussion: "Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?"

Insight from wisdom is the whole point of this inquiry: *knowledge in action as a supplement or substitute for theory; knowledge in practice as the root or result of theory.*

Therefore, a starting point in determining the roots of knowledge - in the context of this inquiry - might be distinguishing between practical knowledge and scholarly knowledge. Whether marketing knowledge is always 'useful', applicable and relevant or whether it differs from the Aristotelian assertion that "what we know that holds true" will be discussed in full below. The classic "what we know that holds true" assumptions of marketing knowledge have created and sustained normative, prescriptive models which are now being critically challenged. According to Wensley, (2002:351), knowledge here is a process of contestation and challenge with

evidence submitted under various rules of procedure and subjected to scrutiny, where "much of the time, explicitly or implicitly, the domain of our discussion is marketing management rather than marketing as a whole".

Where knowledge is implicit in practice or explicit in theory, it is essential that both the nature of how it is created and the context within which it is used is examined as part of a holistic entity; that is the focus of this next section.

2.3 **The roots and nature of knowledge**

Habermas (1978) *ibid* demarcated three strands of inquiry or knowledge as:

- *technical* or *instrumental* knowledge characterised by 'means-end rationality';
- *practical* or consensual knowledge expressed through the 'hermeneutic' disciplines; and,
- self-reflective *emancipatory* knowledge most often considered through the lens of the social sciences.

In addition, there is a strained relationship between the dichotomous tension of how reality is perceived: realism and relativism. The former describes 'truth' as being outside of our knowledge or beliefs, where existing variables can be analysed, explained and used to predict action in certain phenomena; the latter draws 'truth' from social interactions, cultural constructions and the experience of everyday life. This is of course contingent on what is valued, and often sociological and psychological analyses are drawn in an attempt to look for experiential truths. The link between knowledge and social processes is evident in the interaction and negotiation (social interactionism) within which meaning is constructed.

Philosophers like Russell claimed that empirical evidence – the 'knowledge of' from direct experience – precipitates 'knowledge-that' evidence. Those roots have to either stem from or be embedded in practice. A more contemporary perspective is that experience-based evidence is a stimulus for 'knowledge-that' research. In order to set knowledge in the context within which it exists, Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995: 21) defined knowledge as "justified true belief".

The definition of knowledge as espoused by Davenport *et al* (1998:44) resonates here: "Knowledge is information combined with experience, context, interpretation and reflection that is ready to apply to decisions and actions".

The word 'action' is fundamentally important here. According to Rescher (2012: *xvii*), "knowledge is the situational imperative for us humans to acquire information about the world". Primacy here is on the role of context in cognition and its inquiry is anthropologically oriented: the actor cannot be separated from the environment of action (Suchman, 1987).

The schema of this, a social-scientific interpretation of knowledge in context, is a modified derivative of Weber's *instrumental rationality* (Jarvie, 2013). As well as being grounded in symbolic interactionism and Dewey's pragmatist philosophy (Clarke *et al*, 2013), it also has its roots in Haraway's 'situated knowledges' and Foucaldian discourse analysis. This idea of *situated* action (introduced by Suchman *op. cit.)* is in part inspired by the notion of 'purposeful action' and the original purpose was not to produce formal theories of knowledge but to examine the relationship between knowledge and action *in context.*

Myers *et al*, (1979) draw a distinction between "context-specific" knowledge (linked to improving business performance) and "context-free" knowledge (abstract theorising). Hyman and Tansey (1992:1) echo this: "Context-bound theorists assume that the historian's traditional premise that human events are unique phenomena and the historical sociologist's premise that history is composed of both unique events and evolving patterns of behaviour". Of course, this chimes perfectly well with the nature of this inquiry.

The "time-and-context-specific nature of interpretive research" (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988:513) makes the contextual detail the theory (Laughlin, 1995:67). In this sense, 'theory' is a narrative that explains how researchers and informants construct their worlds and the relationship between certain events and actions (Price, 2007). Here, theory is seen more as a process that involves deriving situation-relative insights that might result in analytical abstractions from the study of data-rich research contexts. The theory-practice link in this case is more complex than for positivistic research; some interpretive scholars argue that this type of research can provide managerially useful insights (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott, 2003), while others make a case for this 'scientific style' (Hirschman, 1985) to consider consumption research as an end in itself, not necessarily generating knowledge for marketing managers (Cayla and Eckhardt, 2008; Holbrook, 1985).

Explanation of actors and agency in action – situational logic or 'logic of situation' – is fundamental to this inquiry. It helps understanding of the nature of, and relationship between, marketing theory and marketing practice.

Gamble (2004) describes *procedural* knowledge as being practice, everyday codified knowledge, and *conceptual* knowledge as applied theory and pure theory. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1996) describe how knowledge is acquired through the conduits of socialisation, externalisation, combination and internalisation. Knowledge from practical (often tacit) wisdom – *phronesis* in the Aristotelian sense – is distinct from analytical knowledge (*episteme*) and technical knowledge (*techne*) and is really more than a combination of the two. Phronesis, episteme and techne are all analogous to *praxis*, *theory* and *practice*. Any discussion of knowledge must acknowledge the influence of *tacit* knowledge on both perception and interpretation.

This presents real challenges for researchers seeking objective, unbiased observations (Cameron and Price, 2009:11). Praxis suggests trial and error, contextual contingency and the practical pragmatism of immediate action. There is a constant ricochet between means and ends, between thought and action. The 'end' is a result of deliberating about the 'means' appropriate to a particular action (Bernstein, 1983:147). According to Taylor (1993), word and action, action and reflection, theory and practice are all aspects of the same idea. This is praxis. From contemplation on marketing in action may come generalisable theory reifying practical wisdom (ie: phronesis) which moves between generalised thought to specific situation. As early as 1962 Ramond (quoted in Buzzell, 1963:34) made this very point: "The businessman's practical wisdom is of a completely different character than scientific knowledge… In place of scientific knowledge, then, the businessman collects lore".

Equally, *doxic* knowledge, often based on opinion and belief rather than empirically-proven, must not prescind theory but include it or reference it at least. The *telos* or purpose of a theoretical discipline is the search for 'truth' through critical reflection, often perceived as abstract deliberation. In contrast, a practical discipline is very much anchored in praxis, the *telos* of practical knowledge and wisdom. Marketing sits uncomfortably between the Aristotelian division of science as theoretical, productive and practical. Its *raison d'etre* is useful theory or theory for use. Rescher (2012: xiii) puts this well: "If a philosophical analysis

is to elucidate a conception that is in actual use, it has no choice but to address itself to that usage and confirm to its actual characteristics".

Knowledge, therefore, must be fit-for-purpose and theory must be relevant to practice, otherwise this exclusion may render knowledge not analytical but anecdotal. This is important to note here since the nature of practical analytical and technical knowledge encompasses the empirical investigative parameters of this study.

There is an inherent distinction between truth based on explanatory universal laws and theoretically-based knowledge with objective reality, and the socially constructed truth which is culturally contingent. Rescher *op. cit.* draws a distinction between 'propositional' knowledge (*that*-knowledge of theory) and 'procedural' knowledge (*how-to*-knowledge of practice). The former has generally been the key focus of attention in traditional epistemology, which is the main focus of the next section.

2.4 **Epistemological origins and ontological roots**

This section helps to anchor both the research and the researcher into the theoretical perspective adopted. It is implicit in the research aims and objectives and is fundamental to the methods of data extraction and analysis.

Approaches to investigating knowledge in any area of social science inquiry are contrasted on ontological, epistemological and methodological bases (Corbetta, 2003). Whether tacit or explicit (Noanaka and Takeuchi *op. cit.*), knowledge production, therefore, is an epistemological issue (Stokes, 2011). In general, social science research, the oppositional territories of the epistemological debate of 'knowledge' are between the polarities of rationalism and empiricism (Benton and Craib, 2002). According to Lyotard (1984), scientific knowledge has been a key meta-narrative of the twentieth century. Rationality, not grounded in experiential truth, is based on the validity of establishing fundamental truths through the universal criteria of logic; empiricism is rooted in the recognition and reiteration of experience.

In Corbetta's (2003) view, consideration of what can be considered the nature of reality (the *ontological* question), the basic beliefs about knowledge (the *epistemological* question), must inform how best to approach investigating what can be expected to be known (the *methodological* question). Indeed, as Guba and Lincoln (*op. cit.*, p.105) suggest, questions of method are secondary to questions of paradigm, not only in choices of method but in

ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways. The ontological question, the object of investigation as it were, is the very logic of enquiry: reflection on the philosophical nature of knowledge; the reflexivity of the enquirer.

The epistemological framework is at the heart of the discussion about what knowledge *is*, what it means to *know* and what is actually involved in knowledge. The key sociological theories are: structural functionalism (how society interacts and functions), conflict theory (related to power); and symbolic interactionism (in which meaning is created and negotiated (Barkan, 2011). The various epistemological perspectives – objectivism, constructivism and subjectivism – are different ways of describing "what we know".

According to Foucault (1970:66), "there is always one 'episteme' that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge, whether expressed in theory or silently invested in practice". Any research into social behaviour – attitudes, experiences, contextual meaning – implies an intellectual commitment or stance with regards to epistemology. It underpins the assumptions of the results of the research in any way reflects 'the truth'. Epistemology, the study of knowledge and *what it means to know*, and ontology, the study of being and *what constitutes reality*, condition the choice of research methodology. It is concerned with the nature and forms of knowledge (Cohen *et al*, 2007:7). The generation of theory through examination of subjective meaning or by applying causal inference describes the epistemological choice in social research.

It can be argued that the distinctions between epistemological and ontological stances, specifically in constructivist research, are minimal; they are complementary: if one position is adopted, so is its complement. Epistemology, according to Dillon and Wals, (2006:550) is about "how we make knowledge". It concerns the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known (Guba and Lincoln, 1998:201). Ontology, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), is the "philosophy of being, existence or reality in general" (2001:996). It concerns the latter is about the nature of reality (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:37). Its roots are Greek: όν (being) and λογία (science, study, theory), whereas the etymology of epistemology is έπιστήμη (meaning 'knowledge') and λογία (science, study, theory). Both are interrelated, but as Crotty (1998:10) suggests: "to talk about the construction of meaning [epistemology] is to talk of the construction of meaningful reality [ontology]".

Ergo, the research 'philosophy' upon which an 'argument' is logically reasoned is the development of the research background, research knowledge and its nature (Saunders and Thornhill, 2007), that is, the research *paradigm.* But what is meant by 'the research paradigm'?

The word paradigm has roots in the Greek word παράδειγμα (paradeigma) which means 'side by side' or pattern (apposite in this discussion of diverse discourses juxtaposed and integrated with experiential evidence) and was first used by Thomas Kuhn (1962) to denote a conceptual framework shared by a community of scientists which provided them with a convenient model for examining problems and finding solutions. According to him, the term paradigm refers to a research culture with a set of beliefs, values, and assumptions that a community of researchers has in common regarding the nature and conduct of research (Kuhn, 1977).

It is an analytic lens, based on the set of shared assumptions, values, concepts and practices (Johnson and Christensen, 2005), a way of viewing the world and a framework from which to understand the human experience (eg: Peirce's *pragmatist* approach with its socially constituted nature of sense and logic). Put simply, paradigms are "belief systems based on ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions" Guba and Lincoln (*op. cit.* p. 217). In other words, as Guba (1990) states, paradigms are recognised by the specific holistic interpretation of how something is known to be (epistemology), what reality is assumed to be (ontology) and how this can be explored (methodology).

Recent iterations of epistemology have challenged the traditional ontological notion of *being* with one of *becoming*, learning, interacting and the lived experience (Chia, 2002). Epistemology "provides a philosophical background for what kinds of knowledge are legitimate and adequate" (Gray, 2009:17); ontology pinpoints what exactly is meant by 'social': either constructed or independent of construction. The Durkhemian perspective that 'social facts' are phenomena *sui generis* (of its own kind) asserts that meaning is a collective, negotiated phenomena. Any philosophical discussion on marketing theory has realism and relativism at its epicentre. Epistemology and ontology are often confused and conflated: "being is reduced to knowledge and knowledge is reduced to being" (Kavanagh, 1994:31).

Ernst's (1994) consideration of epistemology as being composed of theory of knowledge and theory of learning is apposite to this thesis which is concerned with inquiry into the principles, practice and pedagogy of marketing. This infuses a practical, contextual dynamic into this inquiry, enhancing its application.

Table 2.1 Four scientific paradigms

	Ontology	**Epistemology**	**Methodologies**
Positivism	Reality is "real" and is apprehensible.	Findings true – researcher is objective by viewing reality through a "one-way mirror".	Concerned with testing of theory. Mainly quantitative methods (surveys, experiments and verification of hypotheses).
Constructivism	Multiple specific, contextual "socially constructed" realities.	Created findings – researcher is a "passionate participant" in investigation.	In-depth unstructured interviews, participant observation, action research and grounded research.
Critical Theory	"Virtual reality" shaped by social, economic, ethnic, political, cultural and gender values crystallised over time.	Value-mediated findings – researcher is "transformative intellectual" changing the social world of the participants.	Action research and participant observation.
Realism	Reality is "real" but only imperfectly apprehensible and so triangulation from many sources is required.	Findings probably true – researcher is value-aware and needs to triangulate perceptions.	Mainly qualitative methods such as case studies and convergent interviews.
How this applies to this inquiry	The ontology of this inquiry is that meaning is an individual, experiential phenomenon.	Taking both emic and etic perspectives augments the analysis of the rich data extracted and enhances creativity of the analysis.	The experiential evidence extracted from case studies, in-depth interviews and questionnaires have been grounded in context.

Source: Based on Parry *et al* (1999) and Guba and Lincoln (1999)

Table 2.1 above is an illustration of the ontological, epistemological and methodological approaches of the four main scientific paradigms of Positivism, Constructivism, Critical Theory and Realism. Approaches often adopted in social research cover qualitative methods which try to examine interpretations and quantitative methods based on a positive approach derived from a natural science methodology. As such, this provides a philosophical basis for the methodology and methods described in *Chapter 3 Research design; objectives, methodology and methods*.

As such, this frames the inquiry beyond simply a technical data collecting exercise and elevates it to a philosophical investigation into how the world is understood and the purpose of understanding. Whilst an objectivist epistemology which claims there to be an objective reality existing independently of consciousness, and a constructivist epistemology which argues that reality is constructed, differ in terms of their theoretical positions, they claim the same ontological positions of 'being' (Chia, 2002).

In plain language, ontology describes *what is being studied*, epistemology *how we can know about what is being studied*, axiology focuses on *what specific questions to ask and why they should be studied*, methodology asks *how these questions are to be investigated* and criteriology is about *how the inquiry can be evaluated.* Kavanagh's (1994:31) insightful comment that "being is reduced to knowledge and knowledge is reduced to being" illustrates how epistemology and ontology have tended to be conflated. The difficulty of empirically proving or disproving the disparate assumptions about 'reality' and 'knowledge' marks out the territory for the debates on paradigmatic differences: constituent tensions and constitutional contradictions. The range of possible options available to conduct research is as diverse as the subject matter being examined. That is the subject of the next section.

2.4.1 **Paradigm debates and the impact on paradigmatic selection**

Irresolvable philosophical debates about epistemology, ontology and methodology have often led to irreconcilable differences between incommensurate theoretical standpoints. The arguments for paradigmatic hegemony marks a leaning towards the dogmatic rather than pragmatic. Separatist (if not sectarian) interests have often acted as a simpliciter, occluding a fuller range of perspectives and therefore precluding any real debate. Although there has been some degree of magnanimity, this unconditional narrowing of views has polarised orientations and has been counter-productive to researching marketing practice and principle. This is what

Sil and Katzenstein (2012:35) are suggesting here: "[Polarisation] detracts from the attention to practical real-world problems while widening the chasm between academia and practice".

This on-going debate suggests either a hegemonic struggle between 'incommensurable' opposite 'meta-narratives' on the one hand, or a continuum of alternative inquiry approaches on the other. Hintikka (1988:16) argued that "the frequent arguments that strive to use the absolute or relative incommensurability of scientific theories as a reason for thinking that they are inaccessible to purely scientific (rational) comparisons are purely fallacious". The debate over incommensurability of paradigms can be traced back to Burrell and Morgan's *op. cit.* originally 2 X 2 framing where they posited four "mutually exclusive views of the social world": radical humanist; radical structuralist; interpretive and functionalist.

Greenfield (1993:178) questioned the mutual exclusivity of the cell structure, referring to this as "a structure of simplistic and ambiguous dimensionality where complex and diverse notions are forced into artificial and ill-fitting unity". On the question of paradigmatic incommensurability, Lowe *et al* (2005:185) claim that "paradigms are symptomatic of an epistemological trap that privileges knowledge to the detriment of other vital virtues". Maxwell (2005) claimed that the conceptual framework serves two purposes: it demonstrates how the work of the researcher fits into existing theory and research; and it states its intellectual goals by demonstrating how the research makes an original contribution to the field.

Any social inquiry, such as this, tries to analyse the 'truth' about knowledge from various parallax views, from different individual perspectives. Kuhn's (1962:62) paradigmatic take on these perspectives is that they become "an entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques and so on, shared by the members of a given community". Each contributor to the marketing knowledge debate is, therefore, wittingly or not, part of the tug-of-war struggle for paradigmatic precedence, often separated by factions rather than facts.

In the search for knowledge, marketing scholars aspire for objectivity in their research, and yet, as Tadajewski (2014:303) points out, "many of the debates that are explored reveal a degree of intellectual intolerance and this is refracted through the institutional system that structures marketing discourse". The search for objective truth in social inquiry is always subjective. Similarly, knowledge is always provisional, as new data – presented through different parallax views - may refute it.

The paradigm 'debates' - essentially the paradigmatic politics of knowledge production - were a commitment to specific philosophical and theoretical perspectives which influence the appropriate selection of data collection and analysis methods. Some saw quality and quantity as "the fundamental dichotomy in social science research – the flags waved by the warring factions of interpretation ethnographers and positivistic scientists respectively" (Robson, 1998:303). Kuhn (1977: *xx*) concurs: "the entire global set of commitments shared by the members of a particular scientific community". This view is reinforced further by Latour and Woolgar's (1986:285) observation that "Each text, laboratory, author and discipline strive to establish a world in which its own interpretation is made more likely by virtue of the increasing number of people whom it extracts compliance".

This debate is all about interpretation and representation: theoretical and philosophical assumptions are replaced; a new perspective, a different world view, takes precedence. However, the creation and use of marketing knowledge is not solely for the purpose of generating knowledge *per se*; motives are intellectual, social, political and personal, all refracted through publication (Brown, 2012; Kavanagh, 2014). Tadajewski (2014:323) notes that any "intellectual debate is not solely limited by the search for knowledge and truth but also deeply political and inter-subjective in nature". However, Brown (2012) believes that these debates have raised the philosophical knowledge of the field; what they reveal is a collective but inter-subjective set of practices (Bradshaw and Brown, 2009).

This is important in the context of this inquiry as it conveys how paradigms are essentially "worldviews" of how knowledge is seen and therefore open to interpretation and demarcation of researcher belief and group stance. It is subjective, and therefore the researcher is using subjective methods. And therein lies the essence of the discussion: *different perspectives of different people in different groups*.

Examination of the power struggles between the orthodox consensus of positivism and interpretivism, of theoretical perspectives over practical application, is at the centre of this debate. Scientific realism (Hunt, 1990) is based on the premise that the world exists independently to how it is perceived. Arndt (1985:12) argues that marketing's perception as an applied discipline is due to the influence of logical empiricism. Mottier (2005:2) describes the "Cartesian ideal of methodic doubting, the subjectivity of the researcher is seen as a bias which obscures the accurate view of reality, whereas the object of study, social reality, is

conceptualised as an external object". This typifies the perspective of positivist social scientists who view the concept of subjectivity perjoratively. Empiricism argues that knowledge is *a posteriori*, dependent upon the evidence of experience, underpinned by inductive reasoning from observation and therefore referred to as indirect empirical knowledge. More to the point, its etymological roots - the Greek words for experience and more specifically 'empiric' for practitioner – is a counterpoint to instruction from theory: *practical experience*.

The word *'positivism'* (ie: the *scientific* paradigm), which was popularised by Comte (Crotty, 1999:18) asserts that phenomena exists independently and can be 'known' through observation (Pring, 2000:59). Knowledge can be developed from generalisable theoretical statements with reliability and replicability the key underpinning pillars of 'rigorous' research. From the 1930s until the late 1960s, Positivism dominated. Non-rational perspectives were eschewed for those based on rational observed data. "The scene was set for the escalation of a scientific panacea as the hegemonic episteme" (Smith *et al*, 2015:3).

This is the very reason Hunt (1994) advocates "reasoned thinking". He questions contribution to the general strategy dialogue with its focus on dysfunctional rather than functional relationships and the lack of acceptance of qualitative studies in marketing. His clarion call for a traditional scientific approach to research in marketing marks out the positivist territory: "The time for obfuscation and obscurantism masquerading as profundity has passed; the time for reasoned thinking is just beginning" (p.16). Williams and May (1996:27) claim that positivism to be "one of the heroic failures of modern philosophy". Science, they claim, does not begin with observations but from the theory to make observations intelligible. Positivism for them was 'theory-laden'. Kuhn (1996) called this a "paradigm crisis".

Arndt (1985:21) comments on logical empiricism as being the dominant marketing paradigm: "The control technology and instrumentalism of the logical empiricist paradigm may well be compatible with the problem-solving needs and pragmatism of marketing practitioners". He criticises the emphasis on "rationality, objectivity and measurement" and which legitimises "the status quo and producing a one-dimensional science" *ibid* (p.21). Alvesson (1994) even suggests that this 'functionalist' paradigm is the product of a managerialist agenda. Hunt (1991:398) takes issue with this claiming that the marketing discipline has not been dominated by one single philosophy. He gets support from Laudan (1977:74) saying that marketing has borrowed from many disciplines: "Virtually every major period in the history of science is

characterised both by the co-existence of numerous competing paradigms, with one exerting hegemony over the field, and by the persistent and continuous manner in which the foundational assumptions of every paradigm are debated within the scientific community".

The Neo-Kantian positivist foundational argument that humans do not directly experience 'truth' but interpret sensations, is reconstructed by Weber's claim that *verstehen* (understanding) of phenomena is the purpose of social science: to underpin and characterise a view that rejects the *positivist* belief that natural scientific research methods are applicable to studying human behaviour. (The roots of this are present in his 'vitalism' living organisms doctrine). Indeed, this derives its validity from the conditions and context of consciousness in which it arises (ie: the totality of our nature" is the epitome of the epistemology of what is described as the *interpretive* paradigm: subjectivism).

Cameron and Price (*op. cit.* p.58) make a telling point about the positivist perspective: "It might work in a business inquiry … but would be foolhardy to ignore the complexities of business situations in the interests of scientific rigour". Maclaran *et al* (2010) argue that by limiting research to the empiricist orientation and logical empiricist paradgims, marketing has remained essentially a one-dimensional science.

All this backlash against "number-crunching empiricism and positivism" is identified by Bechholer (1996) as a victory for interpretivism in the so-called 'paradigm war'. Williams, Hodgkinson and Payne (2004) plot a migration in sociological research to qualitative methods with over 80% of published articles and conference papers being either non-empirical or not using qualitative data. This qualitative bias is not true of social research outside of the confines of academic research which is generally quantitative (May 2005). This epistemological 'objective science' cage has provoked the likes of Anderson (1983:18) to assert that "it is a problem of demarcation…inextricably linked with the scientific method".

Avicenna's concept of 'tabula rasa' (clean slate) provides the 'empirical familiarity' stick of Empiricists Locke, Berkley and Hume to beat the rationalism of Descartes, Leibniz and Spinoza. And yet research which does not have theory as its anchor is often dismissed as 'naïve empiricism', even if the examination of evidence such as literature can be justifiably seen as proxy: theory implicit in text. Similarly, 'Post-positivist' and 'interpretive' are binary, oppositional approaches; the former with a reliance on the rigour of provable and repeatable patterns; the latter anchored in social constructionism. This social domain holds multiple

meanings which are perpetually constructed, negotiated and re-constructed (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000), tracing a tension of at once ideological and material experiential sense-making (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2000).

In stark contrast to positivist perspectives, Interpretivism views reality not as something external but as a subjectively experienced construct, articulated around the notion of the social and cultural world as a milieu of meaning (Herman, 1988:45). Alternative takes on this concept are: Heidegger's 'Umwelt', Husserl's 'Lebenswelt', Dilthey's 'Geisteswelt', Shutz's 'common sense world' and Wittgenstein's 'form of life'. Critical perspectives, whilst resonant with social constructionism, examine more pointedly the effect of power in socially-constructed relationships.

Arndt (1985:11), in opposition to Marketing's managerialist metaphors of warfare, offers an alternative 'paradigm' to Burrell and Morgan's (1980) 'functionalist' framework. He claimed that: "Paradigms are not value-free and neutral. Rather, paradigms may be viewed as social constructions reflecting the values and interests of the dominant researchers in a science and their interest groups". He suggested a new marketing epistemology for breaking free from what he referred to as the conformity pressures of "paradigmatic provincialism" (*op.cit.* p.14) reflecting four main 'world views'. Organised along two dimensions of 'objective-subjective' and 'harmony-conflict' (developing the 'subjective' and 'objective' binary fields as Burrell and Morgan), *Figure 2.2 Four marketing paradigms according to Arndt* below illustrates the various orientations, metaphors and puzzle-solving activities in marketing: 'Radical Structuralist' and 'Functionalist' orientations are replaced with 'Logical Empiricist' and Socio-political' paradigm; 'Radical Humanist' and 'Interpretative' are replaced with 'Subjective World' and 'Liberating' paradigms.

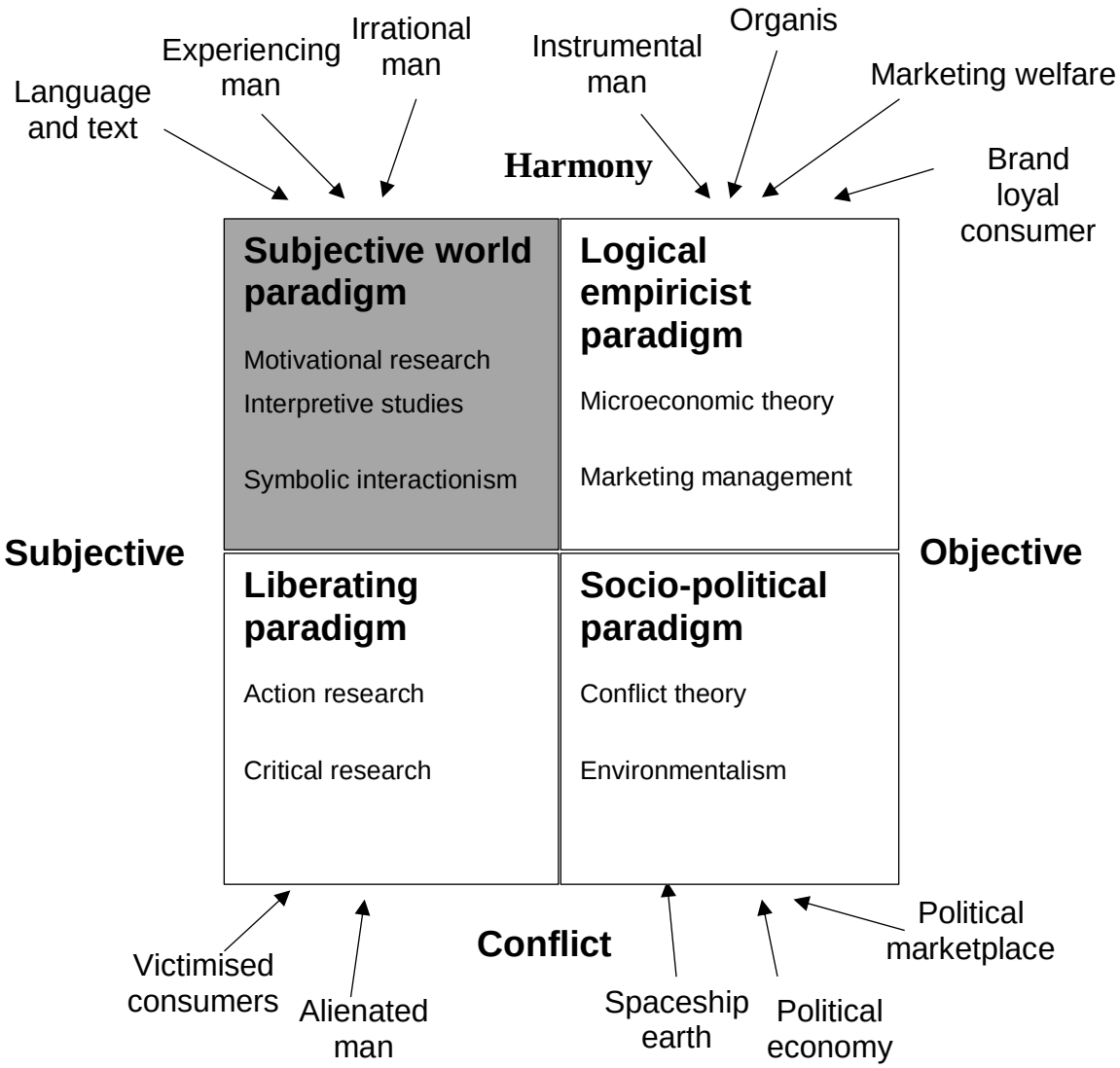
The 'subjective world' paradigm (shaded for reference) resonates most with the ontological and epistemological positions of this inquiry.

All have differing fundamental assumptions and epistemological bases:

- *Logical empiricism*, emphasising "measurability and intersubjective certification", assumes a concrete real existence independent of the observer, equilibrium at its heart with the consistency of immutable laws reinforcing its objective and value-free ontological philosophy.

- The *socio-political* paradigm is defined by certainty: the regularity of behaviour with predictable, uniform outcomes. This paradigm has "ontologically real" structures but differs from the former in that there is a recognition of actor's variability due to interdependency. Hunt (1976) refutation of relativism, asserting that knowledge must be objective, contrasts with Peter's (1976:27) claim that "objectivity is an illusion", Mick's (1986:207) assertion that

Figure 2.2 Four marketing paradigms according to Arndt



Source: Ardnt (1985:16)

"objectivity is impossible" and Mick's (1986:433) contention "researcher objectivity and intersubjective certifiability are chimeras – they cannot be achieved". Indeed, Giorgi

(1994:205) goes further suggesting that "nothing can be accomplished without subjectivity, so its elimination is not the solution. Rather how the subject is present is what matters, and objectivity, by itself is an achievement of subjectivity".

- The *subjective* paradigm rejects the notion of a fixed reality and proffers that reality can only be known through the individual's experience of the social construction of meaning.
- Whilst being similarly rooted in socially constructed meaning, the *liberating* paradigm draws attention to the 'pathology of consciousness'. Morgan (1980:609) puts this well claiming that researchers inspired by the *liberating* paradigm are concerned with "discovering how humans can link thought and action (praxis) as a means of transcending the alienation" caused by psychic and social processes.

The paradigm debates in the development of marketing theory, and its suitability in practice, charts a range of perspectives: a management narrative of formulaic, prescribed control; a social fabric encompassing consumption and a thread of social conscience citizenship; and an academic discipline which at times is of an abstruse and abstract nature separated from practice. As Hunt (2007:278) suggests, "the fact that all marketing research projects have philosophical foundations is that there will always be differences among marketing researchers as to the most appropriate philosophy for guiding research. Therefore, in a very fundamental sense, marketing's philosophy debates will never be over".

2.4.2 **Epistemological role of metaphor in marketing knowledge**

As a literary device to facilitate understanding, metaphor in research and marketing is omnipresent. Drawing on symbolic ideas to make concrete often abstract and complex concepts is a 'well-trodden path' (!) Metaphors are "partial truths and incomplete models" Arndt (*op. cit.* p.17). Root metaphors in marketing tend to illustrate complex dynamics by using human characteristics or emotions: relationship marketing; brand loyalty; the personalities of brands; brand as an intangible asset; as a perceptual point of differentiation. Brand as role (Davies and Chun, 2003), brand as psychosocial narrative (Dahlen *et al*, 2010) and even the personification metaphor as a measurement strategy in the assessment of both the internal and external facets of reputation (Davies, *et al*, 2001) provide potential for broadening scope and application.

Below in *Table 2.2 Metaphors in marketing* is listed commonly used metaphors within that framework.

Table 2.2 Metaphors in marketing

Logical empiricist metaphors	**Instrumental main purposive decision-making**
	Organism in relation to an organisation's environment.
	Militaristic or warfare such as competition, objectives, strategies and tactics, campaigns, guerrilla operations, intelligence, propaganda, groups.
	Brand loyalty meaning the instrumental outcome of an entity.
Socio-political metaphors	Political marketplace of scarce resources and competition.
	Political economies
	Spaceship earth metaphor captures the nature of inter-relatedness and interdependencies in an eco-system with societal responsibilities and corporate governance.
Subjective world metaphors	The irrational man (borrowed from psychology) with emotional non-economic.
	The phenomenological approach of the 'experiencing' man in terms of the expressive behaviour of consumption.
	Language and text is evident in narrative brand development and co-created stories with consumers.
Liberated Metaphors	The passive 'alienated' man as consumer.
	Victimised consumers unable to take advantage of the system.

Source: Arndt (1985:16)

2.4.3 **Possible appropriate theoretical paradigmatic approaches to research**

The truism gleaned from the above sections is that, whether explicitly stated or implicitly inferred, engaging in any research without an epistemological and ontological position is impossible. Every paradigm has "differing assumptions of reality and knowledge which underpin their particular research approach" (Scotland, *op. cit. p.*15). The difference between the natural sciences tendency for unified 'nomothetic' system of laws where consistencies in the data are sought and 'ideographic' orientation of the social sciences which examines the actions of the individual is the distinction between subject and object.

Out of the disenchantment with positivist approaches, a phlethora of qualitative methodologies have become seen as increasingly appropriate for examining social phenomena including

phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory and hermeneutic phenomenology (Denzin and Lincoln, *op. cit.*). According to Vasilachis de Gialdino (1992:153), qualitative methods "presuppose and draw on interpretive paradigm assumptions". Indeed, since the 1980s, an "interpretive turn in social sciences" (Rabinow and Sullivan, 1987) has seen an expanding choice of different interpretive perspectives such as hermeneutics, symbolic interactionism ethnomethodology, phenomenology and discourse theory all with the common link of construction of meaning. Whereas the *scientific* paradigm seeks to generalise, and the *critical* paradigm seeks to emancipate, the *interpretive* paradigm seeks to understand; (Scotland, *ibid* 15).

Interpretivism, described by Crotty (1998:67) as "culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life- world", offers a serious paradigmatic alternative to a positivistic perspective. Here, social reality is different from natural reality: contingent on situation, arguing that knowledge lies in the subjective negotiated cultural 'meaning'. Interpretivist research is concerned with understanding meaning negotiated between social members in any given social situation (Schwandt, 1994:118): knowledge and meaning are acts of *interpretation*. From an interpretivist perspective, the social 'world' is ontologically different to the natural 'world'. Studies of natural sciences are driven by culturally-oriented values where the phenomena are ripe with symbolic, subjective meaning: *Verstehen* [discussed in *Section 2.6* above] is the reiteration, the reconstruction of this experiential subjectivity and is central to any social science inquiry.

Social scientists try to make 'objective' depictions of subjective phenomena by making patterns, grounded in empirical observation, from the abstractions (eg: 'meaning' in marketing). That is the key to the aim of this inquiry.

There is a relational, symbolic element to social phenomena where meaning is socially constructed. Knowledge is not revealed to the observer but discovered, and the observer, according to Husserl, it is as if only see facing surfaces of a solid, opaque object can be seen, the values set aside (or "bracketed"). [This is discussed at length above in *Section 2.6.3* where the 'positionality' of the individual researcher is explicated. Here, the point is made that researchers view the same phenomena through individual perspectives or interpretation]. These views originate with Dilthey (although have been challenged by Rickert and Weber), but there

can be no doubt that social knowledge is temporal and culturally contingent; it is not observed but socially mediated.

2.4.4 **Phenomenology and social constructionism**

Husserl (1970) – and then Simmel (in tandem with Weber) - claims that positivistic approaches are not suitable for capturing, studying and describing human phenomena; phenomenological perspectives are more appropriate because they are free from hypotheses or preconceptions. Phenomenology, as originally formulated by Husserl (1890-1938), is a qualitative method rejecting the rational perspective that "aims to focus on people's perceptions of the world in which they live and what it means to them; a focus on people's lived experience" (Langdridge, 2007:4). Hines (2012: 252) observes: "Life is a temporal stream of experience that, if we are to understand it, needs to be kept at bay (bracketing it). In doing so, it is as Husserl said at the 'horizon of experience, pre-theoretical" and it is that emphasis on critical reflection (separating reality that is seen as 'objective' from subjective essences) from which understanding of phenomena emerges.

In opposition to the Cartesian perspective (which sees the world as objects), phenomenology is fundamentally about the structures of consciousness and how phenomena appear in individual *intentional* or conscious acts. It has philosophy and a theory of knowledge at its heart. Lester (1999:1) reinforces this: "Epistemologically, phenomenological approaches are based on a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, emphasising the importance of personal perspective and interpretation". Explanation rather than description is of the essence. Phenomenological methodology is anchored in the 'science of experience': the systematic reflection of *intentionality*. Intentionality can be manifest in abstract emotions such as perception or symbolism. Consciousness is simultaneously *actional* and *referential* in that it is always doing something and referring to something. Hines *op.cit.* examines this phenomenological contradiction: intentionally trying to understand the limits of rational thought on irrational objects. Sartre (1939) tries to explain Husserl's 'central idea', rejecting Decartes' consciousness epistemology, claiming that "Consciousness and the world are immediately given together: the world, essentially external to consciousness, is essentially related to it". He describes intentionality as being like an explosion *towards* an object.

The intuitive, tacit knowledge which practitioners often have and then try to generalise action from resonates with this notion of intentionality. "Often intuition is little more than the

visualisation of causal effects that are expected to occur in given or anticipated situations" (Johnston, 2014:208). Husserl's phenomenology rests heavily on the Greek words for content (*noesis*) and intentional act (*noema*), and Merleau-Ponty (1962) alluded to this in describing phenomenology as the study of experiences as they appear in the human consciousness. It is a personal, inter-subjective reality.

Inquiries using a phenomenologically methodological approach are therefore an essentially "interpretive sociology" (Weber) focusing on meaning and action, examining realities that are not real but constituted, existing in individual and collective social experience. Schutz's (1967) "phenomenological sociology" is basically a synthesis of these fundamentally interpretive approaches: transcendental phenomenology and action theory.

Phenomenologists make the following assumptions about human nature:

- 'Consciousness' is the essential condition. (Husserl's (1936:91) desire for a "phenomenology of consciousness as opposed to a natural science about consciousness" exemplifies this).

- In consciousness, there is no dualism between objective and subjective because reality is socially-constructed. Experience is temporal, 'of the moment' and, as such, continually reconstituted.

- Meaning is not exclusive or definitive, it is individual interpretation: understanding how a phenomenon is experienced specifically by the person experiencing it.

Meaning can only be understood through the knowledge (described as "reflective intentional act" by Schutz) of the actors involved. This self-reflexivity decrees that knowledge relates to the identity of the subject that produces the knowledge. This is reflected in the research of this inquiry where the experiential knowledge of the researcher is viewed alongside the experiential knowledge of the participants.

This theory is referred to as a "sociology of knowledge" by Berger and Luckmann *op. cit.* who positioned phenomenology not so much as an alternative paradigm but as another perspective. This has resonance in Gidden's 'structuration theory' (structure and agency) as well as Polanyi's 'tacit knowledge'. In doing this, Schutz laid the foundations for social constructionism. Social constructivists argue that knowledge and truth are a result of social

perspective (Schwandt, *op. cit.* p.125) and interaction. Some postmodern researchers, such as Lyotard, claim that reality is a 'narrative', a consensual discourse. Crotty (1998:42) covers this very well, claiming that the epistemological view of social constructionism is "that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context". Whilst phenomenology shares with social constructionism the examination of the human experience as central to any knowledge inquiry, it is critical of the cultural bias in understanding phenomena and promotes that which is inherently true not through acculturation.

Grbich (2007) described this as an approach to understanding the hidden meanings and the essences of the shared experience. It is about grounding our world of consciousness, experience and the life world. Here, the phenomenon speaks for itself; the 'internal logic' is sought. Moran (2000:4) suggests that phenomenology attempts "to get to the truth of matters, to describe phenomena, in the broadest sense as whatever appears in the manner in which it appears, that is as it manifests itself to consciousness, to the experiencer". In other words, experiential meanings are expressed in the phenomena *as it is lived*. Hines (*op. cit.*, p.260) points out that phenomenology is "a movement, a method, and a methodology offering understanding and meta-theoretical insights into our everyday lived experiences".

In this respect, a phenomenological research methodology is particularly suitable to this inquiry as this approach is appropriate for giving the participant a voice in the research, drawing out individual perceptions, judgements, emotions and experiences.

Compare this to traditional 'normative' marketing paradigms where subjectivity, individual perspectives, tacit knowledge, intuition and homogeneity are barely recognised. Wertz (2005: 175) captures this succinctly: "Phenomenology is a low-hovering, in-dwelling, meditative philosophy that glories in concreteness of person-world relations and accords lived experience, with all its indeterminacy an ambiguity, primacy over the known". This is a double interpretive process: as the research participant interprets the meaning of their social context, the researcher must make sense of the participant, retaining the individual's voice whilst maintaining the pertinence of their testimony.

A paradigm paradox here is that phenomenology tries to make an objective study of that which is subjective. Phenomenologists try to capture higher forms of subjective knowledge -

experiential essences – and give an objective, empirical grounding. This goes to the heart of this inquiry.

Marton (1986) described this as "a qualitative, interpretive approach that investigates the ways in which people experience, conceptualise, perceive and understand the various aspects of, and phenomena of the world about them". Phenomenological epoché (Husserl) – when all perceptions are temporarily suspended - rejects objective research and attempts to group collect subjective assumptions ('capta' rather than data) about the existential nature of reality, about lived experience. It tries to capture the phenomena in its 'purest' lived form. This 'bracketing' of biases (suspension of belief) amounts to a rejection of the reductionism of rationality, helping us to inquire about the nature of reality in terms of our subjective experience.

This is referred to as the 'phenomenological attitude' and contrasts with the 'natural attitude'. Manon (1990: 14) discusses critics of phenomenology as "promoting an unregulated rhapsodising on the nature of lived experience, or as seeking to repudiate science view of the world". This is not to suggest that 'phenomenological attitude' is not a conscious approach; on the contrary, what Husserl *op.cit.* referred to as 'intentionality', is very much a theory of consciousness of reflexivity on one's environment (based on Brentano).

Ardley (2011) highlights the focus on individuality and the subjective interpretation of situation in phenomenological perspectives, (something he stresses is absent from the general marketing framework). In other words, from a social constructionist perspective, notions of reductionism are rejected. In this respect, phenomenological research has overlaps with other essentially qualitative approaches including ethnography, social constructionism, symbolic interactionism and hermeneutics, and indeed hermeneutic phenomenology.

2.4.5 **Hermeneutic phenomenology**

Whilst it has its origins in the theological examination of sacred texts, from a social sciences perspective, Hermeneutics has expanded its original orientation and is concerned with the interpretation of human action by human actors. It is not outside the notion of 'meaning' but implicated in the actions and interactions of experience; it is about how a phenomenon is 'read' and how it is to be ontologically interpreted in terms of its 'meaning'. Hermeneutics, in its broadest sense *the theory of searching for understanding in the interpretation of texts and other forms of discourse*, has its earliest roots in ancient Greece. Indeed, the Greek word ἑρμηνεύω

means ‘interpret’. It is, according to Ferraris (1996:1) “the art of interpretation as transformation… [contrasting to the view of theory as] contemplation of eternal essences unalterable by their observer”. Hermeneutics is literally *the study of interpretation*. Hermeneutic phenomenology is literally the *phenomenology* of interpretation.

Phenomenology becomes hermeneutical when there is an interpretive rather than purely descriptive methodology to the inquiry. Hermeneutic Phenomenology, initially linked to phenomenological philosophy, is a qualitative research methodology based on the premise that our experience of the world is already full of meaning (van Manen, 2014), and which aims at reflecting on the lived meaning of this experience. Research of this type tries to examine phenomena before theorisation or even before interpretation itself.

The most prominent proponents of ‘hermeneutic phenomenology’ are: Heidegger (who emphasised the ontological perspective of ‘Being’ or *Dasein* and ‘Being and Time’ or ‘*Sein und Zeit*’); his prodigy Gadamer (‘Truth and Method’ or ‘*Wahrheit und Methode*’); Ortiz-Osés (‘The Sense of the World’); and Ricouer who advocated the presence of social mediation. At its heart, hermeneutical analysis requires searching for concealed truth, to extract from our research a new perspective of existing phenomena (ie: Heidegger’s ‘hermeneutic circle’ of existing truth and new interpretation).

Laverty (2003) distinguishes between phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology. The most appropriate way to examine a phenomenon is to use the ‘hermeneutic cycle’ or ‘self-reflexivity’: reading, reflective writing and interpretation. (Charmaz, 2005:509) refers to this as “locating oneself in the realities”. Here, for the researcher to understand the lifeworld, the lifeworld of others through their experience must be explored. However, the strain applied today owes much to the philosophical hermeneutics of Martin Heidegger - shifting the emphasis from understanding to existential - and the subsequent synthesis of Hans-Georg Gadamer (often referred to as ‘Gadamer’s Hermeneutics’). This is not in the sense of a ‘hermeneutical system’ but rather the cumulative interpretations of interpretation. Or, as Schleiermaker puts it, the art of avoiding misunderstanding: understanding not just the writer’s words but their character, point of view, intent. To this end, Gadamer emphasises the importance of the experiential in understanding. The inspiration of Herder – building on his progenitor Ernesti – is evident in the discussions of the principle of holism and the so-called ‘hermeneutic circle’: the examination of part in order to understand the whole and vice versa.

This has particular resonance with this inquiry as the examination of individual testimonies within their various constituencies, juxtaposed with a holistic view of knowledge domains, is the key foci and approach of the research strategy. As Eisner (1998) suggests, the relevance of each vantage point is fundamental to interpretation. This echoes Bakhtin's (1981) description of 'polyphonic voices': analysing the various parallax perspectives of the respective marketing constituencies.

Austin and Skinner refer to the "illocutionary force" – an act which constitutes an intended action – of a text implicitly and holistically expressing a point of view. Indeed, Heidegger *op. cit.* referred to the need for "a special hermeneutic of empathy" which located understanding in *context*.

Furthermore, his observation that interpretation, (ie: understanding a text hermeneutically), has to be viewed in the cultural, historical and literary context within which the *genre* is set helps to better understand a work. By this he means the "general purpose together with certain rules of composition which serve it". This is particularly relevant when examining normative models of knowledge and indeed this thesis which has the reciprocal nature of text and context (Heidegger's Hermeneutic Circle) as the golden thread running it. This iterative, integrative, interrogative process can be seen in Schwandt's (2001:112) definition of "construing the meaning of the whole meant making sense of the parts and grasping the meaning of the parts depended on having some sense of the whole".

Table 2.3 below illustrates how the basic tenets of a hermeneutic approach are applied to this inquiry.

Table 2.3 The basic tenets of a hermeneutic approach applied to this inquiry

Principles of a hermeneutic approach	**How this applies to this inquiry**
Looking not for explanation but understanding.	Throughout the work a *leit motif* is the view that understanding is as important as explanation, that meaning is socially constructed and interpretation must be situated.

Recognising that this understanding resides in the situation within which interpretation is set.	The inclusion of empirical evidence collected from the real-life experiences of each constituency.
Frames inquiry as conversation**.**	The actual conversations from insiders' perspectives (Merriam, 1998) 'theoretical conversation' in the reflexivity of this inquiry is integral.
Meanings are really 'word usages.	How words have been used to describe action and thoughts articulated through marketing discourse has allowed a deeper investigation and enhanced understanding of the philosophy, practice and function of marketing.
All thought articulated through discourse is bounded by the thinker's capacity to articulate.	The 'immanent' (emic) aspect of the inquiry evidences the author engaging and interpreting the data.
Meanings are grounded in perceptions.	The whole inquiry is an investigation into perception and apperception. The data is grounded in the perceptions of the participants in this inquiry.

Source: Developed from Herder

The fact that a hermeneutic approach recognises that interpretation has to be *situated* reverberates with the essence of this inquiry: the contextual praxis of the marketing practitioner with meanings grounded in perception.

Gadamer (1996:306) refers to a 'fusion of horizons' in describing how understanding is reached: "The horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed … [as it] cannot be formed without the past". A *fusion of horizons* must include concepts of the past, form part of our own comprehension of them, and yet must go beyond this historical past. As this "historical horizon is projected, it is simultaneously superseded" (*ibid* p.307). Here Gadamer's hermeneutics, (with its origins in Heidegger) is distanced from Husserl's phenomenology: differentiating between seeking an essential 'universal truth' and truth as contextual with different meanings at different historical moments.

2.4.6 **Researcher positionality and the need for reflexivity**

The presence or personality of the researcher continually affects, and is affected by, the subject being investigated. As Steedman (1991:53) suggests: "Knowledge cannot be separated from the knower". Furthermore, the researcher is placed in a potentially compromised position and "can never assume a value-neutral stance and is always implicated in the phenomena being studied" (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991:35). By its very nature, interpretive inquiry is subjective, something which Thomas and Davies (2005) suggest should be actively embraced by the researcher. Therefore, the role which the researcher adopts in essentially *interpreting the interpretive experience of individuals* needs to be made explicit (Quinlan, 2011:420). Indeed, selecting the use of a subjective means of inquiry is done knowing that there is not a separation between the researcher and the topic being researched (Hunter, 2004). Disclosure of researcher positionality is advocated by Oliver (2004:25) in order to enhance the veracity of the inquiry: "There should be a declaration of personal and subjective perspectives or prior interpretative frames". Partington (2002:141) also advocates this: "Theoretical frameworks which make explicit the researcher's ontological and epistemological assumptions provide the best foundation on which to construct and defend a theoretical argument".

Therefore, as knowledge in this context is a social and cultural construct, the researcher should always be aware of his/her role in the process in order to use a "personal interpretive framework consciously as the basis for developing new understandings" (Levy, 2003:94). This "personal interpretive framework" makes research methodologies an "individualised application of differing ontological and epistemological positions [which] often lead to different research approaches towards the same phenomenon" (Grix, 2004: 64). Denzil and Lincoln (2002:18) concur: "Every researcher speaks from within a distinct interpretive community, which configures, in its special way, the multicultural, gendered components of the research act". Behind the three interconnected, generic activities which define the qualitative research process – ontology, epistemology and methodology – "stands the personal biography of the [situated] researcher who speaks from a perspective…who approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) which are then examined (methodology, analysis) in specific ways" (Denzil and Lincoln *op. cit.*).

The researcher is "implicated in the construction of knowledge" (Bryman, 2004:500), but hopefully, as Smith and Deemer (2003:428) suggest, this knowledge is "not contaminated but

cumulated". Charmaz (2016:30) makes a telling observation about her experiences with epistemology where she concluded that "much objectivity is by inter-subjectivity, by consensus. If a group of scientists agree that a concept fits certain types of observations, there is a subjectivity involved here that gets wiped out often. At the time social constructionists, in the 1980s, were looking at the social construction of everything by other people, but not their own constructions of their analyses in a self-critical way".

Where the researcher is required to be immersed in both the subject *and* the data, the researcher in a very real sense is what Fetterman (1989:33) refers to as "the human instrument". Knights (1992:515) describes this phenomenon as being "representational", as it privileges the "consciousness of the researcher who is deemed capable of discovering the 'truth' about the world". Researcher positionality, therefore, in terms of "discovering the truth" is a kind of *bricolage*, directed and driven by the researcher; the researcher may be viewed as *bricoleur* as Denzin and Lincoln (2011:8) claim, "producing a pieced-together set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of a complex situation". Indeed, Nelson *et al* (1992: 2) make this very point: "[The research act is] a bricolage… its choice of practice, that is, is pragmatic, strategic and self-reflexive".

In fact, as Charmaz *ibid* reminds us, interpretive research *needs* to be reflexive. In order for the researcher to be aware of the need for conscious engagement with the research process, it is important, as Alvesson and Sköldberg (*ibid* p.4) advocate, to have "reflective or reflexive empirical research" as opposed to 'qualitative research' *per se*. Researchers, however, may remain "innocently unaware of the deeper meaning and commitments of what they say or how they conduct their research" (Pring, 2008: 89) and how the philosophical assumptions made will affect the outcome of the research (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004:6).

This reflexivity, the researcher's personal philosophical position (ie: researcher positionality of research approach chosen), is perfectly captured by Denzin and Lincoln (2005 :22): "All research is interpretive; it is guided by the researcher's set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied". Corlett *et al* (2017) explore researcher reflexivity in qualitative research claiming that an individual's epistemological assumptions affect positionality and "influences the research we do and the knowledge we produce". Alvesson and Sköldberg (*ibid*, p.317) go further declaring that anyone who defines research as

'rational' is misguided: "…we adopt the view of research as a provisionally rational project in which the kernel of rationality is a question of reflection rather than procedure".

The author would subscribe to this perspective: that reflecting on personal feelings and beliefs informs methodological decisions, and, indeed, this is present throughout the work.

The notion of *intentional critical reflection*, deliberately placing objects and phenomena in a perceived 'horizon' of constituent possibilities is of vital importance. Hines (*op. cit,* p.260) draws on Husserl's (1973) notion of 'horizons of experience': "It often appears to social researchers that we begin to explore ontological and epistemological questions by drawing on our historical biographies and philosophical repositories to make sense of who we are, only to find that after we have done so, we arrive at the place we started from". In other words, circular, iterative reflexivity between the part and the whole, the objective and the subjective, rational and irrational is at once hermeneutic and phenomenological: focused and holistic. Husserl's *op.cit.* view of 'horizon' differs from Nietzsche's: the latter a limiting, closed-horizon outlook; the former with a more open, fluid perspective where "the horizons of one experience flow into that of another so that in the continuum of experiences there is a constant flux of horizons" (p. 494).

This notion of intentional critical reflection of our temporal positionality as researchers is in accord with the approach to this inquiry as understanding the subjective self in relation to the objective world (Hines *op. cit.)* is crucial to the researcher being immersed in the context and reflexive of its meaning.

If a phenomenological approach is used, this necessarily implicates researcher subjectivity in the research inquiry: it is the intersubjective interconnectedness between the researcher's positionality and the subject matter of the inquiry - the phenomenon being investigated - which is a key characteristic of phenomenology. The researcher's positionality determines the assumptions and approaches to how knowledge is formed and how it can be examined. Taking a phenomenological approach to research – examining the 'lived experience' of participants - is also a lived experience for the researcher as he/she is at one with the ontological nature of the inquiry whilst learning to see the phenomena through their own lens of pre-reflective, taken-for-granted understanding and prejudices (van Mannen, 1990). The researcher's positionality here is that of a signpost pointing towards essential understanding of the research approach as well as essential understandings of the particular phenomenon of interest (Kafle, 2011:89).

Here, the reflexivity implicit in that process is, in effect, the researcher's voice amongst the research and the participants but also within the data. Locating the author's voice and reflecting on the impact or bias in the research may qualify the value of the research in terms of the contribution to knowledge, but also gives a distinctive and real authentic flavour. As Holliday (2007:122) suggests, "the voice and person of the researcher as writer not only becomes a major ingredient of the written study but has to be evident for the meaning to become clear". Writing reflects our interpretation, is positioned within a philosophical position, and is something that we must accept as researchers. Meaning is participative and thus cannot be reproduced by the interpreter (Schwandt, 2000). Guba and Lincoln (1994:108) posit that it is vital to understand the nature of the relationship between the researcher (or 'would-be knower') and what can be known. And yet Scotland (2012:11) suggests that "the researcher and the researched are independent entities".

The reflexive *reflex* in qualitative research describes the relationship of the inquirer to the inquiry. This is a key characteristic of this inquiry as it is the intention to identify the author's experience and love of the subject being investigated implicitly in the research, writing and ultimately key contribution of the work.

Gardiner (1999:63) perfectly captures the *active* role of the researcher (of the knower) in the hermeneutic approach stressing that "the goal is not objective explanation or neutral description, but rather a sympathetic engagement with the author of a text, utterance or action and the wider socio-cultural context within which these phenomena occur". However, positionality, does allow for both a subjective and objective narrative placement whereby the researcher is *situated* within the many aspects of research perspective (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Of course in a very real sense the role of the researcher differs between the different methodological approaches: the researcher is 'translator' in objectivism, an 'interpreter' in constructionism and 'engaged advocator' in subjectivism (Jones *et al*, 2006). Guba and Lincoln (*op.cit.* p.115) delineate this slightly differently: the inquirer's voice in terms of a positivistic approach is that of "disinterested scientist"; the "transformative intellectual" (Giroux, 1988) in critical theory, expanding knowledge and adding further insight; and that of the "passionate participant" in terms of constructivism (Lincoln, 1991). Using a grounded methodology (see *Section 3.10.3)* conceptualises the researcher as a 'witness', observing phenomenon, engaging with participants, developing theory from the rich data. The researcher represents and

interprets; grounded theory does not capture social reality but is itself a social construction of reality (Charmaz, 1990:1165).

2.5 Strategic overview of marketing knowledge

This section traces the theoretical and contextual origins of marketing knowledge and the discourses within which the battle for hegemony takes place. The search for marketing knowledge in practical context is evident in early marketing scholars' examination of practising institutions (such as farming and retail). Witness Weld's observation about economic theory intersecting with practice: "I am not denouncing theoretical economics by any means… but valuable contributions can be made to theory …. By getting out into the market place with a reporter than by cogitation in a closet" (Kemmerer *et al,* 1918:267). Howell states that "knowledge involves interpretations of facts derived from data as well as abstract comprehensions of phenomenon… [whereas] theory provides ways of explaining or giving meaning to understandings extrapolated from data".

2.5.1 Origins of marketing knowledge

Although the word 'marketing' was first used in 1897 (Brussière, 2000), and some such as Shaw (1995) claim even earlier (eg: Shaw refers to "buying and selling" in '*Miss Parloa's New Cookbook and Marketing Guide'*), the Universities of Wisconsin and Harvard are attributed as having the original centres of influence on the development of marketing thought (Bartels, 1962). And yet, despite the weight of the American influence on marketing, it did not originate in the United States until 1911 (Dixon, 2002:738). Nor did formal marketing education begin in America; Jones and Monieson, (1990) claimed that German courses were evident before the 1900s. As Shaw and Jones *ibid* assert, there were many schools of thought and differing branches of marketing scholarship, some inspired by the scientific management analyses of Taylor, some with a more societal view of marketing's impact.

Marketing, as it would be referred to today, was a direct 'product' (pun intended) of the production and sales-oriented eras of the 1850s and 1950s respectively. But is this a convenient text book/pedagogical categorisation? Not only is there evidence which supports the existence of some form of 'marketing' prior to this 'production' era and but also of marketing working in tandem with production. Fullerton (1988:111) questions the myth of the production era in analyses of marketing's evolution, pointing out that "It ignores the dynamic growth of new

marketing institutions outside the manufacturing firm". He argues that a consumer-driven approach to production (infused with the importation of behavioural sciences such as Psychology and Sociology) is a more accurate way of describing the transition from production to marketing-orientation. He suggests a 'complex flux model' with four distinct eras:

Table 2.4 Origins of marketing knowledge

Setting the stage: the era of antecedents.	The period 1500 in Britain and Germany and 1600 in North America where the advantage of trading grew out of a period of mainly self-sufficiency.
Modern marketing begins: the era of origins	The era of 'persuasive' stimulation of demand (Britain in 1759; Germany and USA in 1830s).
Building a superstructure: the era of institutional development.	Where the main marketing institutions started to appear (Britain 1850; Germany and USA between 1870 until 1919).
Testing, turbulence and growth: the era of refinement and formation.	How words have been used to describe action 1930 to the present day.

Source: Fullerton (1988:111)

Baker (2000:10) describes three key phases in the development of the concept of marketing: 1850's saw the emergence of the 'mass market'; what came to be known as the 'modern marketing concept' from the 1960s; and the post-1990 transition from transaction to relationship marketing. Kerin (1996:5) pinpoints a turning point in the 1960s when marketing literature started to feature a more scientific: "Marketing phenomena, originally addressed by intuition and judgement, were increasingly studied with fundamental tenets of the scientific method".

The establishment of theoretical perspectives as the normative model is a key development in our examination of marketing knowledge.

2.5.2 **Discourses in marketing knowledge**

In order to trace the roots of marketing knowledge, a brief discussion on what constitutes marketing discourse will aid understanding. Discourses, by their very nature context-specific phenomena, help structure the social world and the relationships of embedded subjects, in this case marketing theory and practice. Bernstein (1999: 157) draws a distinction between *horizontal* discourse (which is the knowledge developed through practice), and *vertical* discourse (which is the horizontal and hierarchical knowledge structures of academic knowledge. Marketing discourses are predominantly represented textually in a micro-context (Potter and Wetherall, 1987) and, as Watson (1995) points out, can frame action, be the focal point for the formation of ideas, constitute particular forms of subjectivity and have the ability *to inform practice*. Social reality expressed through discourse can be shaped by extant power and knowledge relations (Foucault, 1980), where normative perspectives are presented and represented axiomatically. Authors contributing to marketing knowledge through texts have mainly done so explicitly from a discourse-analytic perspective and a less than pluralistic normative perspective. For example, Felleson (2011) discusses how customers become enacted through discourse; Elliott *et al* (1995) examine the discourse of symbolic consumption patterns; Copley (2010) demonstrates the nature of marketing in SMEs through discourse. Similarly, Fougère and Skålén (2013:24) posit that "the mainstream marketing management discourse currently aligns to an orthodoxy devoid of reflexivity, characterised as a discipline which never views a world outside of its 'customeric' ideology, irrespective of context or temporality". Brownlie and Saren *op. cit.* refer to an imposition of sterile and simplistic view of how organisations work.

A functionalist perspective of marketing knowledge generation – that it is a prescriptive pre-programmed technology and not the product of human agency - is the orthodox 'Grand Theory' view. Marketing thought – rather than marketing *deed* – has been the overriding conceptual framework and fountain of wisdom. It is the dominant authoritative academic discourse of marketing management theory and assumed to be axiomatic. Brownlie and Saren (2004:2) make the claim that this principal source of knowledge dictates our perceptions of marketing "where there exists an invariable and privileged structure of predetermined categories". This normative model often overlooks intuition, individual action and meaning in small enterprises. The disparity between theory and practice is clearly delineated by Hills *et al* (2008) who

describe successful entrepreneurs practising without reference to leading textbooks which espoused 'received wisdom'.

A rational, linear, pseudo-scientific and very often formulaic model (Wilson and Gilligan, 2005), common in most marketing texts and suggested as universally applicable, has been relatively unchallenged as a normative framework. Cochy (1998), describing marketing as a "performative science", details early market-led developments in America and the call for marketing knowledge to lead rather than follow practice, for a shift from descriptive to prescriptive approaches, from inductive to deductive methods of analysis. Some academics, such as Hackley (2003) and Brown (2005) have criticised the lack of practitioner 'voice'. This echoes the earlier work of Whittington (1996) who urged that academics take seriously not just the work but the *talk* of marketing practitioners. This is very much the territory of researchers from the Critical Marketing School who target the "invariable and privileged structure of pre-determined categories" (Brownlie and Saren, 2004:2).

The inquiry dissects context-specific discourse extracted from the contextual dynamics of actors and agencies in both theoretical practical knowledge domains.

2.5.3 **Power relations in the creation of marketing knowledge**

There has been a dichotomy of theory and practice characterised by the driving of practice by theory (Hollander *et al*, 2005:32), a force predicated on the economic theory of the market as opposed to the social interaction of the market's actors. Implicit in this is the reliance on, and dogmatic belief in, "power/knowledge of a modernism and positivism that is prevalent in mainstream marketing research" (Skålén, 2008:6). Hackley (2001:39) admonishes this type of research as "a political thing constructed through texts". Tavory and Timmermans (2014:10) plot the "triple marginalisation" that Glaser and Strauss claimed qualitative researchers (and particularly those practising grounded research) faced: in a micro-context:

- "*theoretical* marginalisation by functional theorists spinning grand theories and looking for straightforward empirical verification;
- *methodological* marginalisation in which qualitative research was relegated to the production of hypotheses to be tested by statistical quantitative methodologies; and,

- a marginalisation *within the field of qualitative analysis*: ethnographic researchers were said to conduct unsystematic, atheoretical research".

Part of the 'practice-into-theory' challenge, as Hackley (*ibid*, p.735) expertly posits, is what it is to be "an expert at marketing management and strategic levels of decision making, and how might theory in marketing model this expertise in such a way as to promote its acquisition".

At the heart of transferring knowledge from context to text to context is the debate about research-informed practice and practice-informed theory. This has implications for both the practice and teaching of marketing and will be the key focus in this investigation.

As Hackley (2003:1326) states: the lack of critique of marketing wisdom "is problematic not only because marketing has turned into a general managerial discourse; its managerialism is also invested with power based on truth claims that are legitimated by its position as an academic discipline and expertise". Cornellisen and Locke (2005:165) underline this by claiming that: "particularly lacking are studies from a practitioner perspective as opposed to science-centrist accounts of the relevance and dissemination of academic theory in practice". The problem with a 'science-centrist' approach, they claim, is that a linear view of the relationship between acedemia and practice is deficient in terms of : under-valuing the impact practitioner knowledge has on the assessment and use of acdemic research: presents a static perspective on a dynamic environment; doesn't account for power relations or situational constraints; ignores largely academic-based knowledge in favour of narrow instrumental uses; and ignores the problem of academic theory and practitioner-based knowledge integration (Cornellisen and Locke, *op. cit.* p.168).

Although there is evidence of the managerialist meta-narrative being challenged, a lack of empirical research into how marketing is done reinforces this perspective. Gummesson (1991:65) posits that "there is a lack of empirical, inductive research geared towards marketing and sales". Harris and Ogbonna (2003:483) echo this: "practitioners appear to be bombarded with conflicting and contradictory prescriptions for the organisation of marketing" Skålén *et al* (2006) apply Foucault's concept of governmentality to marketing in terms of how and whom governs marketing. He describes an 'episteme of action' as consisting of discourses, institutions, knowledges and practices, the epistemological inference being that knowledge is grounded in the "experience of order" of a specific age. A Foucauldian perspective on power

in the production of knowledge is that representations of power are made through different forms of discourse: oral, written, audio-visual etc. His assertion is that power determines truth. In other words, power and knowledge are inextricably linked.

Furthermore, Fougère & Skålén (2013) applied the concept of 'customerism' in relation to the managerialistic ideology of marketing theory and how this has been developed through various discourses. And yet, many empirical marketing studies "do not pose the primary socio-phenomenological question: What is marketing work?" (Svensson, 2007:275). The 'practice turn' or 'performative turn' in social sciences changed the emphasis from external reality to one based on action and interaction.

Skålén et al (2007:6) suggest that "the domination of managerial research has never been counterbalanced by a systematic critical analysis which is problematic given the assumed legitimisation of the managerialism that ensued". Their central argument is managerial marketing has promoted a customer-centric government of organisations effecting a shift in power promoted by traditional marketing discourse without a sufficient social critique or articulation by practitioners. This discourse reinforces a rhetoric, stipulating a particular type of rationality (Skålén *et al*, 2008). Practitioners have their own internalised 'informed' intuition "immanent and insistent experience and knowledge" Saren and Brownlie (*ibid* p.7) (which is discussed below in *Section 4.16.1 Challenging the orthodoxy*). Whilst (Tadajewski, 2010) advocates examining and promoting the connections between with marketing actors, Skålén *et al* (2007:6) is sceptical that prescriptive academic discourse is used in organisations.

This debate focuses on the essence of where this inquiry, philosophically, should be focused: the lack of critique to challenge the hegemony dominated by science-centric perspectives and provide a practitioner perspective which is lacking in the literature.

To examine the power of knowledge, therefore, knowledge of power must be examined. Lash (2007:) claims that "power has become ontological rather than epistemological: *epistemological* power characterised by scientific discourses imposed on its subjects; *ontological* power doesn't build on representative knowledge but on activist interventions". Marketing has often received criticism for being ideologically-driven (Whittington and Whipp, 1992) and with an orthodox consensus which is seen normative and prescriptive in terms of the approach to research and pedagogy (Brown, 1995; Hackley, 1998; Wittowski, 2005). Because marketing is a practice where meaning is created and negotiated in a social setting, the crux of

the debate centres on the question of what knowledge is and how the dominant paradigms and perspectives have gained and maintained hegemony through epistemological bias. Indeed, the roots of marketing knowledge, with its American micro-level view and micro-level view (particularly the German product-oriented, consumer-centric singular quest for profit maximisation), can be said to display a colonial epistemology which has privileged the originators of marketing thought: the academics and writers of marketing. Harvard Business School's close links with management practice was instrumental in the development of the *Harvard Business School Case Method* in which analyses came from the direct experience of real business situations (Contardo and Wensley, 2004) which spawned a "classical education rhetoric" "conceived as a social scientific exercise in the broadest sense" (Hackley *op. cit.* p.23).

Although the School of Business at Wharton, Pennsylvannia was established in 1881, the School of Business at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1900) and Harvard Business School (1908) paved the way in terms of marketing education in America. As a knowledge-based subject, the common aim was to "discover management principles and communicate them to practising or aspiring managers, for the general betterment of organisational effectiveness, consumer welfare and society as a whole (Wilkie and Moore, 2006). The ready adoption of positivist, Western prevalent paradigms has made change difficult, the adopters viewing (ironically Weber's *verstehen*) through the very same dominant epistemological lens. This manifests a kind of paradigm positionality, where texts as the written architecture of discourse exhibit this embedded in theories but where change in the marketplace often comes from the need for competitive advantage as opposed to any ideological *force majeure*.

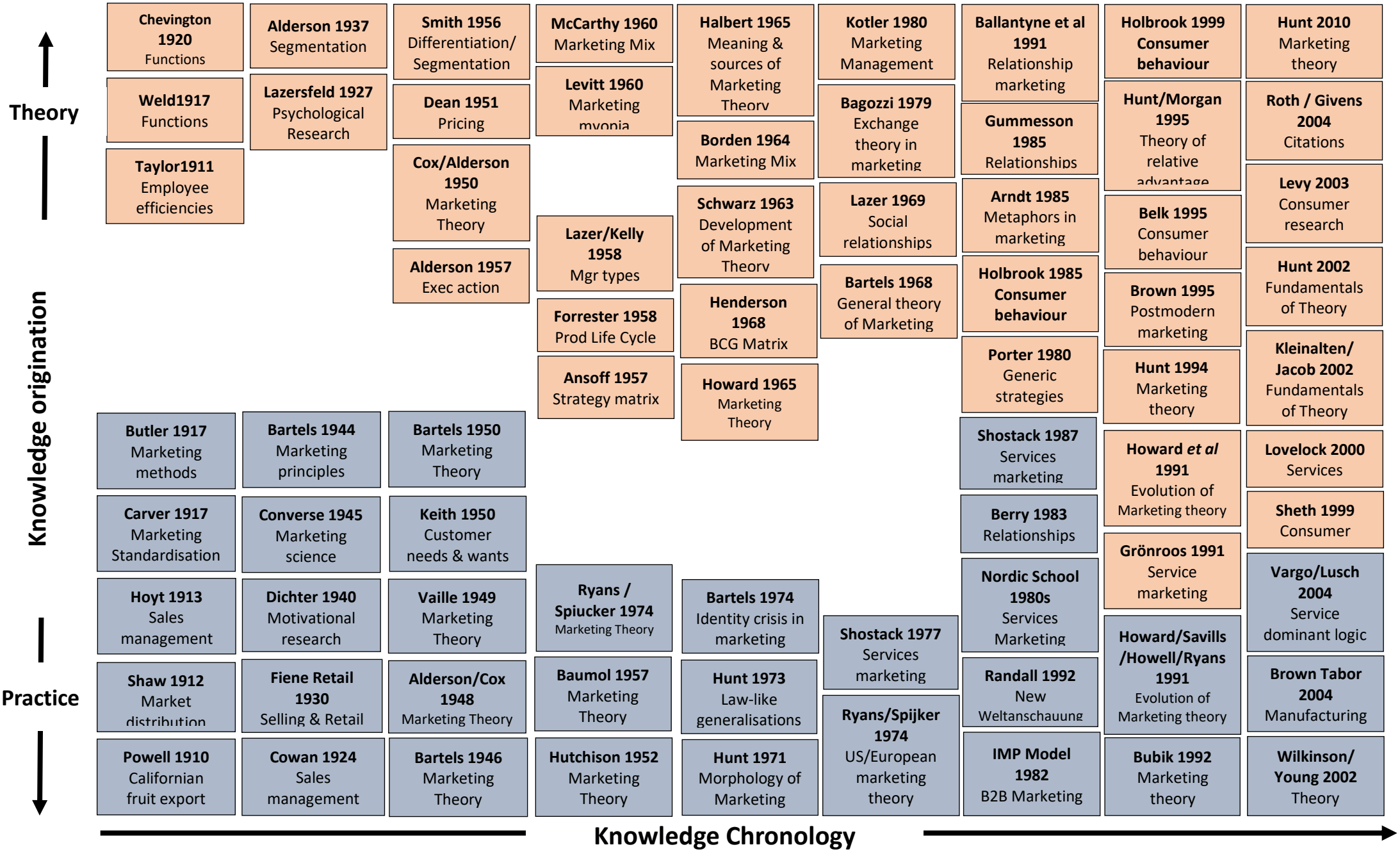
A reflexive engagement with marketing texts is required to enhance understanding of the implicit power in the published word. Gadamer (1976: *xxix*) captured this well stating that "our possession by language is the ontological condition for our understanding of the texts that address us". Ideology expressed through marketing discourse can be seen in various neo-Marxist critical theory perspectives of consumerism, objectivism, ethical behaviour as well as authority and power relations (Brownlie *et al*, 1999).

This bifurcation that Hackley *ibid* refers to - on the one hand a critical social scientific orientation manifest in the diverse and fiercely contested outpouring of marketing scholarship; on the other a naïve managerial perspective with a prescribed set of universal problem-solving

techniques – describes a kind of schizophrenia: interrelated but opposite, incommensurable epistemes. Marketing knowledge can be codified *in texts* (Bannock *et al*, 2002; Mercer, 1999), and the important role of tacit knowledge *in context* (Kohlbacher, 2008) has been neglected. Zack (2003:69) suggests: "Companies are increasingly realising that knowledge is often produced and shared as a by-product of daily interactions with customers, vendors, alliance partners and even competitors". But whilst there is evidence of an expanding inclusiveness of marketing theory, its application has often been met with opprobrium. Increasingly, the failures of marketing practice have been attributed to marketing research and marketing education. Lowe *et al* (2005:198) even claim that "marketing studies legitimise an 'amoral scientism' as the guiding principle of marketing practice". Indeed, some such as (Scott, 2007:7) accuse marketing studies as reinforcing a "relatively homogenous and uncritical business school agenda".

Figure 2.3 Knowledge origination model is a graphical illustration of the roots of marketing knowledge development. The salmon boxes indicate 'claimed' theoretical input, emanating from the domain of academe; the blue ones indicate knowledge which derives directly from, or observation of, marketing practice). Whilst it could be argued (indeed has been argued elsewhere in this work), that most theory originates from observation of practice, it is not within the scope of this inquiry to definitively debate the origins (represented in the diagram). Space, time and the main focus of this inquiry does not allow a comprehensive list of all developments which have impacted on the development of marketing knowledge. Rather the illustration of the role of practice in informing and, in fact, forming theory.

Figure 2.3 Origins of marketing knowledge



Source: Developed from Lüdicke (2006) & Shaw and Jones (2004)

2.5.4 **Practical marketing knowledge**

As Baker (*op. cit.* p.41) points out, "in an increasingly information-saturated world, knowledge needs to be firmly rooted in order to be distinctive and meaningful".

2.5.4.1 Practical marketing roots

To all intents and purposes, Marketing was created in the 1900's, services marketing in the 1980's, business-to-business and relationship marketing in the 1990's, with the 'paradigm shift' of a service-dominant logic 'emerging' much later. Except that this is all pseudo-scientific sleight of hand. Marketing manuscripts are often palimpsests bearing the faint hallmark of existing insight and well-established praxis. Observation is often mistaken for discovery. Like some latter-day Columbus, sailing into an already inhabited landscape of indigenous marketers, marketing academics have sometimes 'discovered' various iterations of the marketing concept and intermittently stabbed their intellectual flags of ownership into the existing soil of marketing practice.

Our "historical consciousness is always filled with a variety of voices in which the echo of the past is heard…we have, as it were, a new experience of history whenever a new voice is heard in which the past echoes" (Gadamer, *op. cit*). Of course, meanings are prone to interpretation dependent upon context and time. Vargo and Lusch's (2004) acclaimed signal – and some would say single – contribution to marketing history championed a supposed new model of marketing which viewed the product-dominant logic of marketing as inappropriate and, indeed, incorrect. The 'model' is a synthesis of existing practice and focuses on: demand-side rather supply-side; the emphasis on value creation; oper*ant* (invisible, intangible) rather than oper*and* resources; the distinction between service not services. This 'new' logic "opened up an international dialogue on the output of marketing as *value propositions* rather than as goods and services" (Gummesson, 2007:114). Certainly, the re-emphasis on value rather than services (and rather than products before it) is progressive thinking and makes sense, but this is not new territory. It does, however, present a good synthesis of previous marketing theory and, also acknowledges good practice.

Often, different parallax perspectives masquerade as paradigm shifts; conceptualisation can sometimes ignore or lack acknowledgement of contextual knowledge formation. This describes

a sort of marketing *mise-en-abîme*: a sometimes-characteristic microcosm of marketing placed inside, and indicative of, the broader marketing landscape.

This illustrates the phenomenon reifying practice in theory, a theme which is present throughout this inquiry.

For every 'marketing myopia' (Levitt, 1960) strategic insight (which *does* sound like an optical contradiction), there is a kind of 'structural amnesia' (Connerton, 2008:64), a "forgetting as planned obsolescence" which sometimes marks out the false reification of theory by academics. Tadajewski and Brownlie (2008) rehearse the evidence of context before text described by the likes of Borsch (1958) and McKitterick (1957) where organisations indigenous to the marketplace in the 1920s and 1930s had enacted marketing before it was scripted. What is indisputable, is that marketing through a rational 20th Century lens of economics was manifest as a managerial discourse focused on the demands of the market rather than the requirements of a broader franchise. Therefore, it is that phrase '*to all intents and purposes*' – or to correctly acknowledge its origins 'for all intents, constructions and purposes' - which is the focus of this study.

The critical lens through which the review of marketing discourse is refracted in this study is panoptic not reductionist.

Two factors fix this debate: the relevance of research and the evidence of experience. The acceptance of practice-based theory has been hitherto prevalent with practitioners and practitioner consultants, and yet marketing scholars have yet to comprehensively embrace experience as an academically robust concept (Holbrook, 2007; Palmer, 2010). Hackley (2009) describes the 'striking contradiction' of the parallel universes of theory and practice: a highly packaged brand with a remarkably uniform identity as a set of universal managerial problem-solving techniques; a diverse body of critical marketing scholarship and research.

Many practitioners believe that marketing practice should be viewed as a profession; many marketing academics argue that marketing should be taught and researched as a professional discipline (Hunt, 2010). The production and dissemination of marketing theory has been essentially a managerial imperative, locked within often formulaic, mainstream marketing and strongly institutionalised within marketing academic discourse. Even the American Marketing Association's definition of marketing focused on 'marketing management' centred on the firm

not the broader marketing canvas. According to Hubbard and Lindsay (2002), marketing phenomena is described in 'empirical generalisations' which frequently precede and indeed drive marketing theory. Seeing this from the perspective of complementarity rather than competition, Wensley (*ibid*, p. 397) suggests it is "much more of a duality than a dualism".

This is fundamentally important to this inquiry. The dualisms of objective/subjective and theory/practice forms the bedrock of this examination of the textual and contextual domains or opposing epistemes. The dialectic of negation between orthodox logic and interpretive perspectives of knowledge is challenged by the promotion of a complementary duality with equal status with compatible, reciprocal relational possibilities.

2.5.5 **Tacit knowledge and practice analysis**

The issue of knowledge and its characteristics has been widely discussed in the scientific literature. Knowledge has *practical value* - it permits humans to define, characterise, evaluate, and learn to solve problems (Krogh *et al*., 2000). The inference in the normative perspectives of marketing knowledge is that 'good' theory reinforces the profession of management and advances scientific knowledge. Whilst this may be true of 'pure' disciplines, what of more *applied* disciplines which have an empirical, practical orientation such as Marketing? Practice often has *tacit* knowledge which is not expressed as theory; theory often has *explicit* knowledge not related to practice. Nonaka and Takeuchi *op. cit* describe how knowledge is acquired through the conduits of socialisation, externalisation, combination and internalisation:

- *socialisation* (from tacit to tacit);
- *externalisation* (from tacit to explicit);
- *combination* (explicit to explicit); and,
- *internalisation* (explicit to tacit).

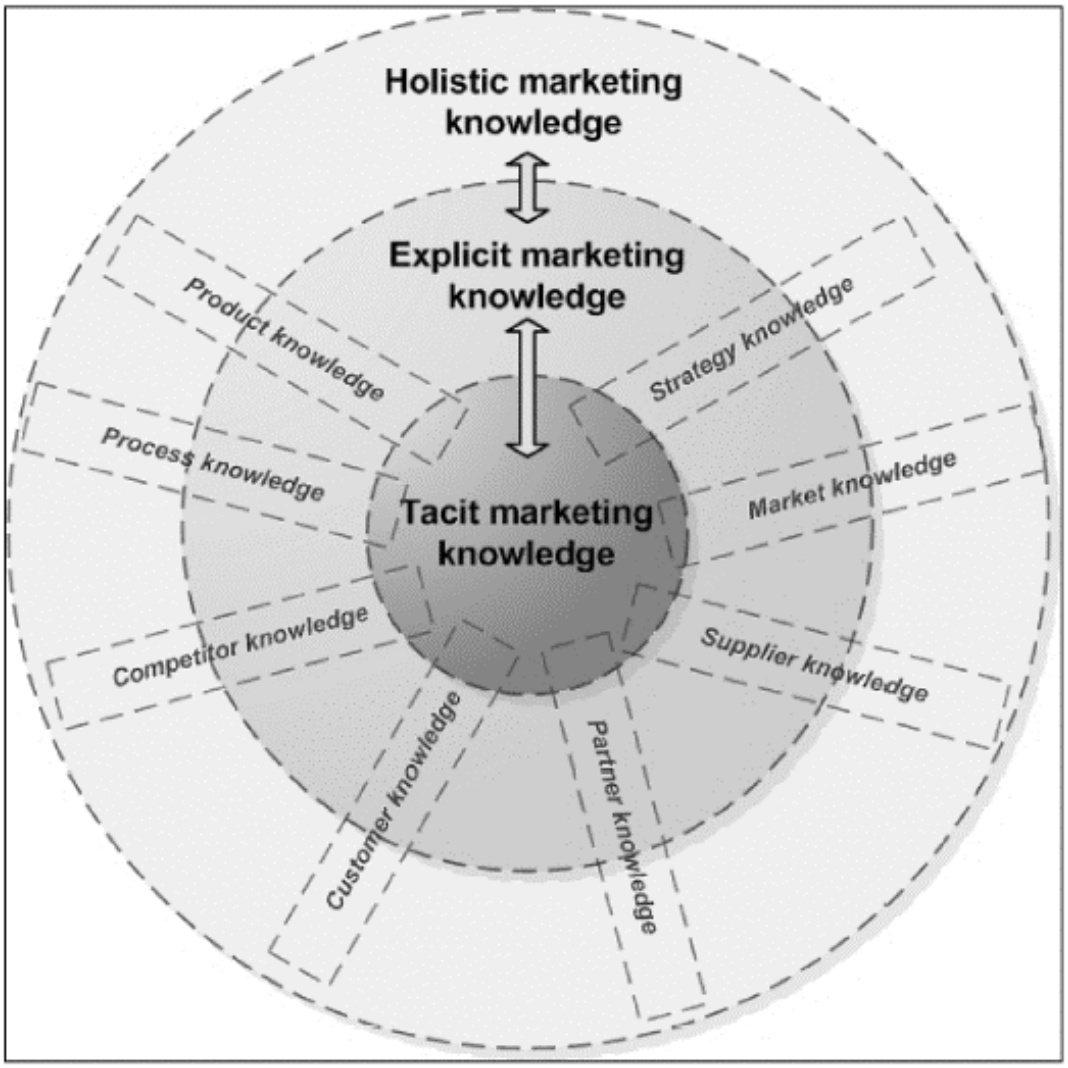
The idea behind this process is one of dynamic interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge and pays homage to Polanyi's (1962) research on the distinctive between tacit and explicit knowledge. According to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), the knowledge creation process involves a dynamic interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge, which is commonly known as 'knowledge creation spiral' in the SECI model. This model achieved almost

paradigmatic levels of acceptance even allowing for the empirical criticisms. The overall process consists of four different modes of conversion, the first one being the transfer from tacit knowledge to tacit knowledge, or the socialization process. The second process deals with the integration of different forms of explicit knowledge, which is called as combination. The third and fourth modes of knowledge conversion take into account the interactions between tacit and explicit knowledge. The process of making tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge is externalization, whereas the conversion of explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge is called internalization (Figure 1). Each of these four modes possesses distinctive practices and the interplay between them constitutes a dynamic process of knowledge creation (Nonaka, 1991; 1994). As Mende (2005:189) suggests, knowledge consists of *process* knowledge and *product* knowledge: knowledge *about* knowledge. This is 'meta-knowledge.

Where *explicit* knowledge is formulated and expressed textually, *tacit* knowledge, a term first introduced by Polanyi (1967), stems more from intuition, common sense, or personal experiences. This type of implicit situated learning comes from actions, routines, values, and emotions (Nonaka et al., 1996), and consists of both experiential perception and tacit apperception: pre-existing and learned knowledge from interpreting the requirements of the environment as well as the historical context within which that environment is set. It is contingent on temporality, experience and situational complexity. can also be individualised, not recorded formally, a result of imitative, memetic behaviour. Explicit knowledge is rational and objective, while tacit knowledge is experiential, intuitive, and subjective (Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009).

There is a growing, some would say, anti-Cartesian movement in general management academia to highlight the importance of tacit knowledge as the key psychological condition of activity. Indeed, Schatzki *et al* (2001:16) claim that mental entities, once the principal root of knowledge, to be "irredeemably contaminated by the 'Cartesian' interpretation of them as occupants or aspects of a distinct space or realm". There is a growing rejection of a formulaic marketing 'process' which minimises external concerns, is objectively-driven or has no

Figure 2.4 Practitioner's view of marketing knowledge



Source: Kohlbacher (2007:199)

recognition of tacit knowledge in organisations (Hackley, 1999). Instead, they (practice theorists) privilege practical capacities such as know-how, skills, disposition and tacit understanding. This reflects the dynamic within which an alternative view of knowledge

creation – practice theory or practice analysis - has emerged. Practice theory describes the dialectic between human agency and social structure: how people make and understand the world they live in. The pressure to impose scientific rules on tacit practice have been largely resisted. Pickering (1997), suggests that there is no need to look for hidden structures; a social theory of the visible is enough. Slettli and Sighall (2017:19) refer to this as indigenous knowledge which is culturally-specific. Tacit knowledge serves as a foundation of social practice (Tsoukas and Vladimirou, 2001) and a foundation for change (Tsai and Li, 2007). Individuals acquire diverse tacit knowledge as they participate in various social practices.

Reckwitz (2002:243) traces "theories of social practice" in the work of cultural theorists such as Bourdieu's (1972) 'praxeology', Giddens' (1984) 'structuration', with antecedents in Wittgenstein and Foucault's 'praxeological' analysis of the relationship(s) between bodies, agency, knowledge and understanding. Wittgenstein stated that the meaning of a concept is to be understood through its use, through the knowledge gained from social interaction. The 'motor skills' metaphor Polyani gives of learning to ride a bicycle is apposite to determining what is tacit knowledge. Riders may not know the theory, the science, behind cycle propulsion but learn by observation and practice.

The tacit knowledge of practitioners thus becomes a source of creativity and inspiration for seeing problems in a new light and searching for solutions (e.g. Leonard and Sensiper (1998). However, the general critique of the scholarly literature is the lack of attention to the role of social practices for knowledge conversion (Nonaka and Von Krogh, 2009). Brown (2005:4) puts this well: "The tragedy for marketing is that it continues to disavow its discursive roots in the hope that it will be taken seriously by the scholarly community in general and the social, sciences in particular". The irony is that marketing executives and practitioners barely read academic literature (McKenzie *et al*, 2002). Brown *op. cit.*gives the most damning – and therefore most worrying – verdict on this state of affairs: "They get nothing from it. They regard the leading journals as vehicles for scholarly advancement rather than founts of eternal marketing wisdom. They turn to Jack Trout, not *JM*, to Tom Peters, not *JMR*, to Sergio Zyman, not *MS*, when they're looking for meaningful marketing insights". Day (1994:10) claimed that tacit knowledge, that gained from experience, is most likely to be "the most influential knowledge". Schegelmilch and Penz, 2002:7) declare that valuable knowledge in the marketplace is "unique and mostly context-specific…difficult to obtain". Ichijo (2002:478) draws a distinction between knowledge that can be categorised as 'exploration' (intellectual

capital within an organisation) and knowledge that can be categorised as 'exploitation', (enhancing this intellectual capital with existing knowledge).

2.5.5.1 Intellectual perspectives of marketing practice

Kumar (2015:1) discusses how "the marketing discipline has experienced changes in terms of its dominant focus, thought and practice" and how this has accelerated since 1996. Howard (1983:91) suggests a framework for how marketing practice is represented from an intellectual perspective with axes of:

- *empirical* (customer and functions within the firm) and,
- *axiomatic* (competitor and contribution and present value).

Lambin *et al* (2007) draw a distinction between operational (the prescribed '7Ps' tactics) and strategic marketing (long-run competitive advantage). As can be seen below in *Table 2.5 Comparison of operational and strategic marketing*, the former is an *action-oriented* process which is all about targeting, positioning and segmentation; the latter is an *analysis-oriented* process with the aim of producing economic value.

Table 2.5 Comparison of operational and strategic marketing

Operational Marketing	Strategic Marketing
Action-oriented Existing opportunities Non-product variables Stable environment Reactive behaviour Day-today management Marketing function	Analysis-oriented New opportunities Product-market variables Dynamic environment Pro-active behaviour Longer range management Cross-functional organisation

Source: Lambin *et al* (2007)

This illustrates the two often-polarised domains of practice and theory: the former with an inward-looking internalised perspective of operational activities and often short-term timelines; the latter with a longer-term external view of the environment. This helps to put the

research aim "To examine and evaluate the epistemological bases and values of what constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice and critically analyse perceived and actual disconnects between these two epistemes" into context. It was around the 1980s when the emphasis on *strategic* marketing took hold where market share, sustainable competitive advantage (Porter, 1985) and the correlation of profitability suggested a more prescribed formula. PIMS (the Profit Impact of Marketing Strategy) did much to raise the credibility of applied marketing (until critics exposed the root was correlational not causal). In addition, critical marketers – particularly those of a Scandinavian persuasion – questioned whether marketing had begun to move away from its original orientation: the customer's perspectives. Fuelled by the likes of Arndt, Day, Howard and Hunt, who claimed that the neo-classical, micro-economic school of marketing was patently inadequate and starting to look radically out-dated, the 'relationship marketing' paradigm, with antecedents in the notion of social rather than economic exchange (Anderson, 1982) was beginning to be largely influential. It is interesting to note that the Scandinavian 'IMP' Group (International Marketing and Purchasing), with its Industrial (soon to be Business-to-Business) orientation, created the foundations for the 'interactive' service-oriented models of Håkansson (1982), Gummesson, (1987, 1993) and Grönroos (1990) and the subsequent extensions into CRM (Customer Relationship Management) (Webster, Malter and Ganesan, 2004). Ambler ibid uses the metaphor of a "marketing elephant" to illustrate how author's views of what constitutes marketing is a product of their own perspectives: one market-driven (Day, 2004); one value-creating (Prahalad, 2004). These views are not incompatible but are not comprehensive. To comprehend the whole elephant, claims Ambler *ibid*, one must include all valid perspectives.

This is the mark of heuristic analyses and the purpose of this work.

Table 2.6 Using academic theories in practice below illustrates Cornellisen's (2000:322) guide to using academic 'knowledge' theories which have practical application including:

- *instrumental* (a rational, scientifically-derived problem-solving model);
- *conceptual* (linking ideas to practical solutions); and,
- *translation* (a hybrid of mutually influential theory and practice entities).

Table 2.6 Using academic theories in practice

Model	Point of departure	Type of supply	Implementation of knowledge	Application to this inquiry
Instrumental	External effects of science as matter of rationalising, one-way relations	Discrete knowledge	Direct, solution to problem, short-term	The localised, specific short-term theoretical application of marketing knowledge is resonant of the 'solutions to practical problems' asymmetrical ethos of consultancy.
Conceptual	External effects of science as matter and rationalising, one-way relation	Diffuse knowledge, concepts and generalisations extracted	Indirect, long-term, generalisation and particular concepts used as knowledge base for policy	Whilst this is a more generalised and longer-term theoretical application of marketing knowledge, it is still mainly asymmetrical.
Translation	Science as a source of knowledge, science and practice mutually influential entities	Discrete and diffuse knowledge, selectively received, shaped and used	Intro existing interpretation schemes (reflective practitioner), information actively shaped and translated	This represents the perspective espoused by the author in this work: symmetrical, hybrid and mutually inclusive and respectful of theoretical and practical perspectives.

Source: Developed from Cornellisen (2000:322)

The ‘instrumental’ model, which is characterised by discrete, one-way knowledge, maybe doesn’t offer concrete solutions to practitioners, but rather provides general visions or illustrations, empirical interpretations becoming reduced models with limited practical application. The ‘conceptual’ model offers diffuse knowledge, generalised for wider usage. The ‘translation’ model, however, is based on a synthesised template of both frameworks where science and practice are intertwined but knowledge is adapted not adopted: transformation of knowledge a process of reinterpretation and perhaps reinvention to suit localised heuristics and environmental factors. The emphasis here is on the acceptance of theory’s relevance to practice by the “reflective practitioner” (Schön, 1983), an active engagement of praxis with both theory and practice. It is relational model which suggests a dyadic fusion rather than separation. This version has more resonance with the author’s own proposal, developed in relation to the aims of this inquiry. ‘Instrumental’ models exhibit the localised, specific short-term theoretical application of marketing knowledge is resonant of the ‘solutions to practical problems’ asymmetrical ethos of consultancy. ‘Conceptual’ models offer a more generalised if asymmetrical longer-term theoretical application of marketing knowledge. ‘Translation’ models represent author’s perspective in this work: symmetrical, hybrid, mutually inclusive and respectful of theoretical and practical perspectives. A comprehensive literature review of Knowledge Management (KM) in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) undertaken by Massaro *et al*, (2015), found fragmented and mostly unrelated research with little practical application.

2.5.6 **Theoretical marketing knowledge**

Any inquiry into what may constitute a theory of marketing knowledge should have a definition of what is meant by ‘theory’. Emory and Cooper’s (1991: 65) definition serves this purpose: “A set of interrelated concepts, definitions and propositions that are advanced to explain and predict phenomena”. Whilst theory is essentially a conceptual framework used for explanation of knowledge, research is a creative conduit for producing new knowledge.

Attempts at developing a normative theory of marketing are predicated on prescriptions of principles and practice aimed at developing valuable, sustainable customer relationships. And yet concepts and contexts are contingent on dynamic competitive environments, changing customer requirements and political pressures which determine its nature and application.

Marketing as theorised by academics has sometimes presented a nomothetic, reductionist, introspective view of the discipline, characterised by a fixation with formula not form and with mechanics not magic. According to Hackley (2001:74), marketing is "textually worked up as an empirically bounded, normatively ordered and problem-categorisable field of enquiry". This restrictive approach describes a sort of insular dwarfism of auto-communication rather than collegiate dissemination of the discipline, sometimes seen as an incestuous insider game of abstraction not application (Smith, 2013). November (2008:435) refers to this as a kind of marketing knowledge *myopia,* claiming that academics have become "production-oriented, with the objective of producing as much of it [theorised marketing knowledge] as possible".

Ardley (2008:189) questions the appropriateness of academic text books – with their "penchant for universal truths and positivistic approaches to social reality serve only to obscure the interpretive nature of knowledge" - as practical guides to applied theory. To state that there is a divide between marketing academe and marketing practice, as (Hunt, 2002) suggests, is certainly a truism. The locus of this discussion is whether the pursuance of a normative, prescribed model of marketing knowledge has become a counterpoint rather than complement to marketing practice, and the negative consequences of disciplinary fragmentation (Wilkie, 2000) have created a self-sustaining schism. Academics, according to Alvesson and Deetz (2000:84), "are often viewed as ideologists. They serve dominant groups through socialisation in business schools, support managers with ideas and vocabularies for cultural ideological control at the workplace level and provide an aura of science to support the introduction and use of managerial domination techniques".

Boddy 2007:217) points to a strong focus on scientific research in the marketing discipline which "has caused a form of academic myopia and precipitated a debate on the role of research in business schools". There is a perceived character of management research, expressed in terms of the problematic status of its 'relevance' for management practice. Indeed, debate concerning the general topic of knowledge production in management studies led, in the UK at least, to a much publicised chracterisation of management research on the basis of the degree to which users and producers of knowledge products were integrated within managed networks of activity and collaboration.

Has marketing's 'Grand Theory' locked us into an intellectual cage which has become less and less applicable in practice? Indeed, the difficulty with researching and constructing a general

theory of marketing, which by its very nature should be applied, is that all academic writing is filtered through: author positionality; assumptions about research methodology; the selection of favoured theories and belief systems; and general intellectual disposition to what marketing 'knowledge' is and how it can be investigated.

2.5.6.1 Marketing knowledge in thought

The history of marketing knowledge in thought is, according to Belk (2014), nothing if not the positioning of individual perspectives against those of others. To attempt a broad perspective on this theory-practice dichotomy, one must put it into some sort of historical context. Marketing historians, following in the academic tradition of economists, originally examined marketing by separating the practice from theory by dividing "roughly into marketing history and the history of marketing thought" (Jones and Shaw, 2002:39). Initially, marketing scholarship was not expressed in published journals dedicated to the theory of marketing. Indeed, an article on marketing from Shaw (1912) was actually published in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, which existed long before the equivalent *Journal of Marketing.* Sivadas and Johnson (2005:339) describe the "cumulativeness and the diffusion of knowledge emanating from academic journals in marketing" where intellectual influence and knowledge transfer may be traced by examining the relationship between citation incidence and perceived quality of journal rather than the accessibility of the journal.

(Bartels, 1962:12) noted that "By 1900, the body of economic thought consisted of many theories that had been developed in England, France, Austria, Germany, the United States and other places". His 1988 complex compilation is undoubtedly the seminal work on marketing as a discipline in terms of signposting what constituted marketing; reading his successive editions is a monumental documentation of the development of marketing thought. Wilkie and Moore (2003) identify four discrete eras of marketing thought acquisition and use where the development of marketing as it affects and is affected by external factors can be seen:

- Pre-Marketing (before 1900);
- Founding the Field (1900-1920);
- A paradigm Shift (1920-1950); and,
- The Shift Intensifies – A Fragmentation of the Mainstream (1980s – present).

The first era shows the embryonic emergence from economics into a stand-alone discipline, universities offering courses in distribution and selling. The generalised principles and concepts then started to develop via parallel professional associations and journals. From the start of the 1950s, the discipline started to move towards a managerial problem-solving school with roots in quantitative methods and informed by the behavioural sciences. Finally, internal and external reflexivity – manifest in critical perspectives – is characteristic of a more critical, quizzing perspective of marketing.

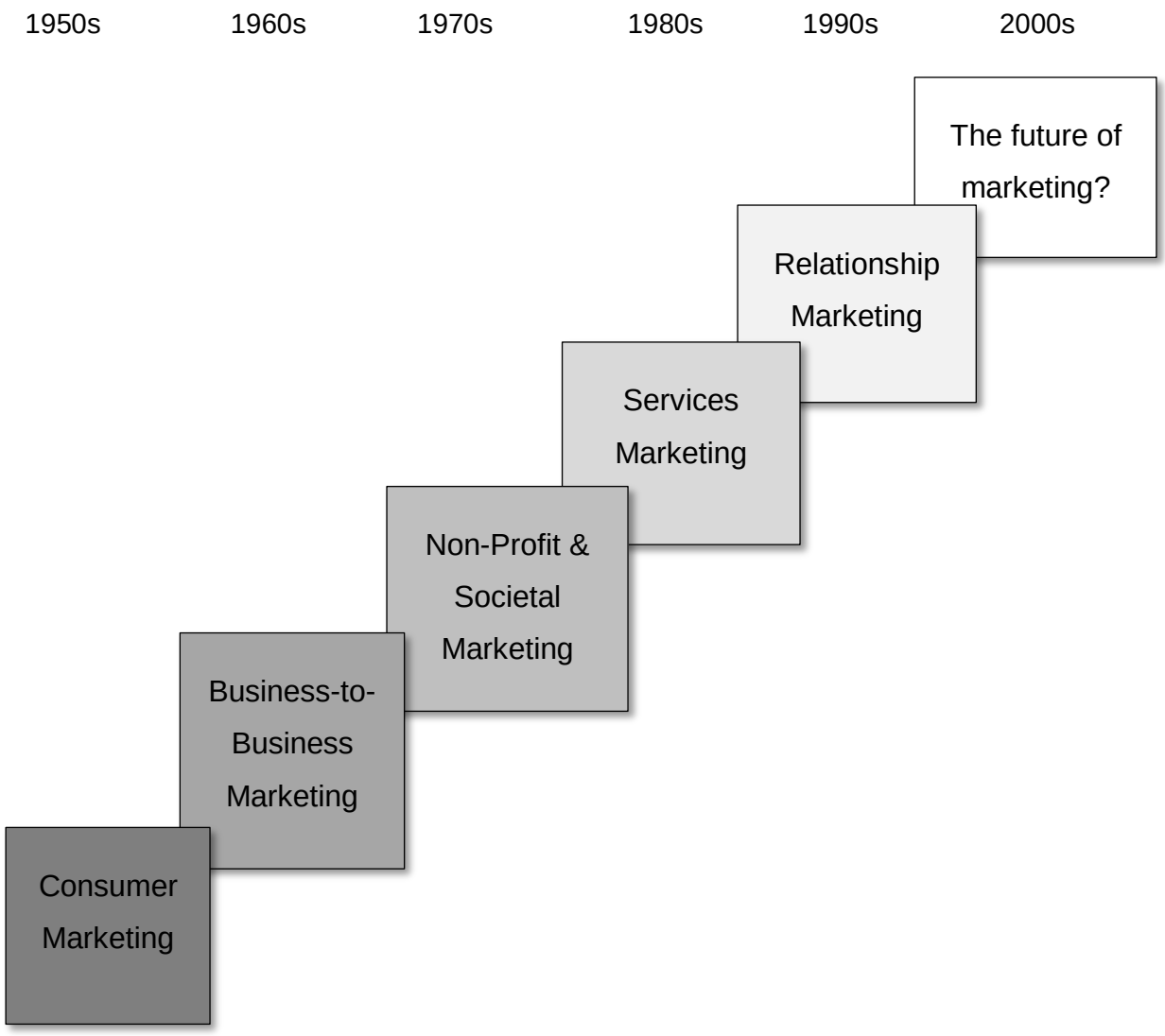
The notion of what was to become known as 'marketing' was "firmly ensconced within the field of economics", evident in the works of Smith, Malthus, Jevons, Ricardo, Mill and Marshall (Wilkie and Moore, 2003: 116), and 'market' precursors back to the ancient Greeks. Indeed, Powell (1910) is attributed with coining the term 'marketing' as a description of fruit exports from California.

Early marketing scholars served a kind of 'knowledge apprentice' in Germany as part of the German Historical School where emphasis was on learning from actual practising managers in industry in which a disciplinary self-reflexivity (as well as a social conscience) was instilled. This was a departure from classical Economic theory and developed "inductively and deductively generate contingent principles that were historically and delimited [exhibited temporal and locational relativism]" (Tadajewksi *op.cit*. p.3). When this was transported back to Harvard and Wisconsin, it had the effect of softening the prevailing paradigmatic perspective of positivism, although certain retail-oriented academics in this embryonic period (eg: Paul Nystrom) advocated systems of marketing practice based on both academic and empirically-informed research (Jones, 1987:91). A 'science of retailing' approach however, with precedents in the scientific marketing management inspired by Taylorism, was supplemented by the likes of White (1927) and Kyrk (1923) who painted a much broader marketing canvas embracing the behavioural sciences (particularly the latter whose work *The Theory of Consumption* provided a blueprint for the emerging 'softer' science approach).

Indeed, the period 1930-1970 offered a perfect platform for the application of a behavioural scientific approach – drawing on anthropology, psychology as well as psychology - with the likes of Dichter being a touchstone for motivational and social researchers. The concept of branding and the general approach to 'targeted' marketing stem from this period. Most saw academic value in broadening the reach of marketing; some in terms of an embracing of

philosophical pluralism; some as an "imperial drive" (Monieson, 1988) of the marketing concept into new territories. This shift towards the application of behavioural science logic, juxtaposed with the managerial orientation of profit-maximisation is certainly the first

Figure 2.5 Development in marketing theory

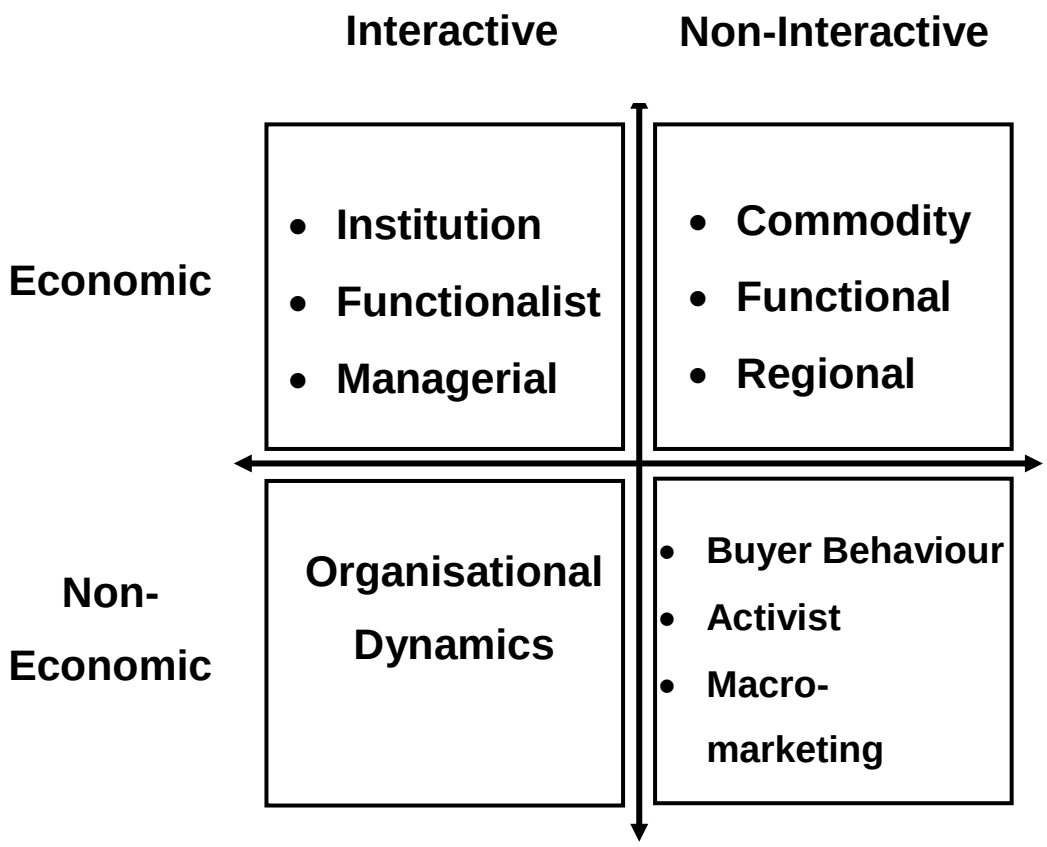


Source: Adapted from Christopher, Payne and Ballantyne (1991)

paradigm debate: the hedonism of the consumer versus critical marketing. *Figure 2.5 Development in marketing theory* below plots the developments in marketing theory.

Set against this period, the post-80s saw a much more rancorous debate amongst the various camps of positivism, scientific realism and relativism. The marketing academy certainly has evidenced skewed power relations with questionable objectivity, Firat (2014) even claiming that it is manifest in the acceptance of top institutions as having superior credibility. Levy's (2006:7) comment is an accurate reflection of the situation: "Dominant paradigm people often resist… They are defensive, unrealistically acting as though their livelihoods are jeopardised by the projective techniques and ethnographies that they imagine will replace surveys, regression and multivariate methods". Brown (2005:105) gets even tougher, calling this magnetism to positivism as "Mid-Western Empiricism: the hypothetico, quantifactory,

Figure 2.6 Schools of marketing thought



Source: Sheth *et al* (1988)

varimaxed, conjoined, Lisrelised, experimentissimo, big-science-or-bust mindset". Certainly, those other 'parallax views' such as interpretive, consumer-oriented, humanist, feminist, critical management, critical marketing and post-modernist have, and are registering, their paradigmatic footprints in the shifting sands of the positivist 'world view'. On the other hand,

Hunt, a chief proponent of positivism, states his allegiance to "an eclectic blend of logical empiricism and realism". Sheth *et al* (1988) delineate the separate 'schools of marketing thought' illustrated above in *Figure 2.6 Schools of marketing thought*.

Shaw and Jones's (2005: 244) analysis (illustrated in *Table 2.7* below), looked at schools comprising: Marketing functions, commodities, institutions, management and systems, as well as from the perspectives of consumer behaviour, macro-marketing and exchange. Whilst this is descriptive of the roots of marketing thought, it is also indicative of the disconnects.

Table 2.7 Schools of marketing thought

School	**Selected marketing pioneers**	**Question(s) addressed**	**Level or focus of analysis**	**Key concepts and theories**
Marketing functions	Shaw 1912, Weld 1917, Cherington 1920, Converse 1922, Maynard *et al* 1927	What activities (ie: functions) comprise marketing?	Macro: • Marketing middlemen	Value added by marketing activities
Marketing commodities	Shaw 1916, Cherington 11920, Copeland 1924, Breyner 1931	How are different types of goods (ie: commodities) classified and related to different types of marketing functions?	Macro: • Trade flows • Types of goods	Classification of goods: • Industrial and consumer • Convenience, shopping & sport • Products & services • Search & experience
Marketing institutions	Weld 1916, Nystrom 1915, Clark 1922, Maynard *et al* 1927, Breyer 1967, Mallen 1967, Stern 1969, Bucklin 1970	Who performs marketing functions on commodities?	Macro: • Retailers • Wholesalers • Middlemen • Channels of distribution	Channels of distribution: • Market gaps & flows • Parallel systems • Depots • Transactions & transvections • Sorts & transformations • Postponement & speculation • Conflict & cooperation • Power & dependence
Marketing management	Alderson 196, 1965, Howard 1956, Kelley and Lazer 1958, McCarhy 1960, Kotler 1967	How should managers market goods to customers (clients, patrons, patients)?	Micro: • Business firm as seller/supplier • Any individual or organisation as supplier	• Marketing mix • Customer orientation • Segmentation, targeting & positioning

Marketing systems	Alderson 1956, 1965, Boddewyn 1969, Fisk 1967, Dixon 1967	What is a marketing system? Why does it exist? How do marketing systems work? Who performs marketing work? When is it performed?	Micro: • Business firm as seller/supplier • Any individual or organisation as supplier Macro: • Channels of distribution • Aggregate marketing systems	• Interrelationships between parts & whole • Unity of thought • Marketing systems • Micro & macro marketing • Societal impact
Consumer behaviour	Doichter 1947, Katona 1953, Engel *et al* 1968, Kassarjian and Robertson 1968, Howard and Sheth 1969, Holloway *et al* 1971, Cohen 1972	Why do customers buy? How do people think, feel, act? How can customers/people be persuaded?	Micro: • Business buying • Consumer buying • Individual or household consumption	• Subconscious motivation • Rational & emotional motives • Needs & wants • Learning • Personality • Attitude formation & change • Hierarchy of effects • Information processing • Symbolism & signs • Opinion leadership • Social class • Culture & sub-cultures
Macro-marketing	Alderson 1965, Fisk 1967, Dixon 1967, Hunt 1976, Bartels and Jenkins 1977	How do marketing systems impact society and society impact marketing systems?	Macro: • Industries • Channels of distribution • Consumer movement • Public policy • Economic development	• Standard of living • Quality of life • Marketing systems • Aggregate marketing performance
Exchange	Alderson 1965, Kotler 1972, Bagozzi 1975, 1978 & 1979, Shaw and Dixon, 1980, Houston and Gassenheier 1987, Wilkie and Moore 2003	What are the forms of exchange? How does market exchange differ from other exchanges? Who are the parties to exchange? Why do they engage in exchange?	Macro: • Aggregation of buyers and sellers in channels Micro: • Firms and households • Any two parties or persons	• Strategic & routine transactions • Social, economic & market exchange • Barter & market transactions • Generic exchange//

Source: Shaw and Jones (2005: 244)

2.5.6.2 Theoretical marketing roots

Early identification of the need for a theory of Marketing rested on the shoulders of the likes of Alderson, (1957), McGary (1953), Bartels (1968) and McInnes (1964). Palda's (1964) measurement of cumulative advertisng effects on sales marked one of the earliest connections of scientific theory to practice from which a theoretical knowledge – rooted in the disciplines of psychology, economics, sociology, statistics and anthroplogy - base has been built.

This collective inspired a half century of debate about the very fibre and nature of what Marketing Theory was and could be about. The 'science or art' debate, initiated by Alderson and Cox (1949), countered by Vaille (1949:522) ("marketing will remain an art"), polarised on the pseudo-scientific and the vocational. Those who advocated the need for a theoretical approach argued for a mimicking of the natural sciences; those with a managerialsist leaning looked for theory anchored in practice. On whether Marketing was actually a 'science' Buzzell (1963:34) had expressed doubts: "Marketing would appear to be primarily an area for application of findings from the sciences (primariy the behavioural sciences) and not a science in itself. Should then the attempt to make it a science in itself be abandoned as a wild-goose chase?" According to Ramond (1962, quoted in Buzzell, 1963: 34) "the business man's practical wosdom is of a completely different character than scientific knowledge. While it does not ignore generalities, it recognises the low probablity that given combinations can or will be repeated… In place of scientfic knowledge, then, the businessman collects lore". Baker (2011) disputes this claiming that "adducing the paucity of managers' use of marketing models and theories is not suffcient to refute the posssibility of the development of scientific theories in marketing". Hunt (1971:65) suggested that "Theories are systematically related sets of statements, including some law-like generalisations, that are empirically testable. The purpose of theory is to increase scientific understanding though a systemises structure capable of both explaining and predicting phenomena". In this, he basically concluded that advocates and critics concurred in terms of their polarised beliefs about theory (Hunt, 1983:10). And yet, Kerin (1996:5) pointedly (in a review of Marketing's first 60 years) claimed that Marketing literature had become "more scientific" with an emphasis on quantitatve analyses and a fixation with the need for provable theory: "Marketing phenomena, originally addressed by tuition and judgement, were increasingly studied with fundamental tenets of the scientific method". Anderson (1983:25) questioned the veracity of Hunt's positivistic orientation: "Despite its prevalence in Marketing, positivism has been abandone by these disciplines [philosophy and

sociology of science] over the last few decades in the face of overwhelming historical and logical arguments that have been raised against it".

This is a crucial turning point in the debate as it marked a signficant shift in focus: it wasn't about whether Marketing should have a scientifc theory but what *type* of scientific theory it should take. The notion that there wasn't (nor could be) one 'correct' method for evaluating Marketing came really from this period of debate (and obviously fuelled by Kuhn's insightful paradigm declarations). It was a debate about realism and relativism. Lüdicke (2006) documents steps in the development of a theory of marketing delineating theory, observation and practice. (See *Appendix 9.4)*. Lusch and Watts (2018) describes how the complex marketplaces characterised by global competition, accelerating sustainability concerns and an increased focus on innovation risks fragmentation of thought much more severe than that which Theodore Levitt articulated in 'Marketing Myopia'. Hunt (2017) posits that the four 'eras' of marketing thought had significant promise when first founded (1900-20), neglected in in 1920-1950, rose to prominence between 1950-1980, has become fragmented from 1980 and has prospects that are both promising and problematic. This is, as Edwards (2018) suggests, due to the difficulty of applying marketing theory to practice in such a "diffuse and protean contextual backdrop". She argues that "where there is imprecision there is scope for amateurs and self-servers to seek to inveigle their way into the cannon". There are a growing number of researchers and management practitioners who believe that conventional marketing theory is often ill-suited to the challenges of the modern business environment (Maclaran, Chatzidakis and Parsons, 2018).

One recent attempt to construct a General Theory of Marketing is Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). With its focus decidedly on the centrality of service, has as its major tenet the focus on integration of resources (née 'Resource-Based View'), both intangible and dynamic, with 'operant resources' (knowledge and skills) seen as the basis of exchange. At the centre of discussions on the notion of value in the application of marketing knowledge is whether this occurs in *exchange* or in *use*. A further modification – *value-in-context* (Vargo, Maglio and Akaka, 2008) – is suggested, accounting for: co-creation, the integration of other resources as well as the contextually specific nature of consumption. According to Vargo, Akaka and Vaughan (2017:1), value is phenomenological, experiential, always co-created and is both multidimensional and emergent. Value-in-use has its origins before the service-oriented movements – both academic and in practice – of the late '70s and '80s, but the popular 'service

dominant logic' articulation attributed to Vargo and Lusch (2004; 2017) of a 'service ecosystem', emphasises the importance of an extended context perspective (Akaka, Vargo and Schau 2013) and a 'service for service' rationale. The definition of such a service ecosystem as "a relatively self-contained, self-adjusting system of resource-integrating actors connected by shared institutional arrangements and mutual value creation through service exchange" (Vargo and Lusch, 2016:11) focuses on the phenomenological value derived from exchange and the application of resources. Value is always individually and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary "because value is idiosyncratic, experiential and meaning laden" (Vargo and Lusch, 2008:7). Findsrud, Tronvoll and Edvardsson (2018) put forward that view that resource integration is vital to value co-creation despite evidence research which focuses on competencies as enablers of resource integration, particularly the role of motivation as a key driver.

The initial iteration of 2004 was further synthesised in *The Service-Dominant Logic of Marketing: Dialog, Debate and Directions* (Lusch and Vargo, 2006), and has recently been modified accommodating a broader range of applications and acknowledging many academic reservations. As with a considerable amount of the 'premises' of SD Logic, there is resonance with (if not regurgitation of) past marketing concepts. The 'integration of resources' (née 'Resource-Based View') has roots inextricably linked to Porter's 'Value Chain'. When the 'people' element was added to an extended marketing mix, Berry, Bitner *et al* were progenitors of the idea that knowledge and skills (ie: operant resources) supplemented, and to some extent supplanted, the physical product. Similarly, the notion of 'co-creation' resonates with the concept of 'symbolic interactionism', espoused by the authors of consumption, branding and a plethora of integrated marketing communications texts and papers, where symbolic symbiosis is the essence of 'the meaning of consumption'. Furthermore, Holbrook would posit (an argument that can3not be articulated within the scope of this thesis), that value is both active and *re*active: the consumer is not always proactive (or 'operant') in the creation of value. Reactive value (when things are done *to* a consumer by an object), as well as the value-*depleting* nature of consumption, needs to be accounted for if a broadened theory of resources is to be developed.

Whilst the 'logic' is reasonable sound, criticism stems from the fact that SD Logic either purports to, or has been received as, a new paradigm. Shostack's (1977:73) seminal 'breaking free from product' work predates the authentic initiation of this thought process: "The classical

'marketing mix', the seminal literature, and the language of marketing all derive from the manufacture of physical goods….". This insight not only shattered marketing myths but laid the foundations for a more comprehensive panoramic paradigm of marketing extolled by the likes of Schlesinger and Heskett (1991), Normann and Ramirez (1993), Grönroos, (1994), Gummesson, (1995), Hunt and Morgan (1995). Even Vargo (2018:720) admits that the essential essence – that 'service-for-service' exchange value is co-created – has deeper roots: "As with all 'new' ideas, neither of these was entirely new and the credit for the development of S-D logic extends considerably beyond Vargo and Lusch". This somewhat contradicts the self-proclaimed 'conceptual turn' of the idea of 'co-production': mutually-beneficial network benefits of the original iteration. It constitutes a re-evaluation of an idea claiming to be a foundation for a general theory of marketing (Lusch and Vargo, 2006). Not so much paradigm shift as parallax perspective. Vargo (*ibid*, p.729) admits as much: "It also should not be ignored that S-D logic, even at a metatheoretical level of abstraction, has normative implications". Vargo *et al* (2010: 127), in an honest review and reassessment of SD Logic, qualify the claims that it is a "dominant worldview": "Although SD Logic is not a paradigm [according to Kuhn's definition of scientific practice drawing on models of coherent traditions of scientific research], it functions at a paradigmatic level and provides an alternative lens, a mindset". It is the discipline, they proclaim, that will define whether SD Logic becomes a world view, bottom-up not top-down.

Furthermore, there is an inherent contradiction in its ontological and epistemological bases. On the one hand, scientific realism - the insistence that there is one reality – appears to be its main ontological stance (Vargo *ibid,* p.733); on the other, it espouses the validity of experiential, contextual 'truths' (ie: individual interpretation). A previous claim that "ontological reality, of which the social is a part, and its 'natural laws' can be approximated, particularly from a metatheoretical level of abstraction, applicable to all levels of aggregation" (Vargo and Lusch, 2017) hints at compromise not conviction. Tellingly, particularly in relation to the organic 'emergent' nature of SDL, Vargo (*ibid,* p.735) states that "whereas predictability is desirable, explanation might be the more essential condition of theory", which essentially highlights the problem with the "presence of downward causality" in its theoretical base. The goal of a general theory of marketing - a more applicable, relevant normative theory of marketing for practitioners - is not fully realised here, and Wroe Alderson's (1957) clarion call for "not an interpretation of the utility created by marketing, but a marketing interpretation of the whole

process of creating utility" is not satisfied. At best, as Vargo (2018: 733) suggests, "theory ties together more basic elements – e.g., lawlike generalizations, sub theories, and insights and provides explanation". Wright and Russell (2012:218), whilst acknowledging the impact SD Logic has had, suggest that "the arguments to date have overlooked issues of testability, over-explanation, and normative power, and they are undermined by a definitional slide in the justification of service-dominant logic". O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy (2009:145) question whether SD Logic is not a "backward step" arguing that it is "neither logically sound nor a perspective to displace others in marketing". Further still, they reject the notion that viewing *all* businesses as service entities is not a progressive approach……[recommending] a disjunctive definition of service which would throw up service categories that needed to be studied in their own right if progress is to be made" (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy, 2011:1310). Levy (2006:62) offers a realistic summary: "Those practitioners and scholars of a 'service-centred' frame of mind will feel reinforced, maybe enthusiastic or annoyed because they always thought that way anyway". Further still, Deighton and Narayandas (2004:19) question whether this is a new dominant logic or "a familiar set of contingencies" and the answer lies in the inductive development of theory from phenomena closely observed and thickly described".

Those dismissive of the 'ground-breaking insight' claim that SD Logic replaces 'service' for 'value-added' or is "firm-centric not experience-centric" (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004), argue that the logic is too abstract (Shugan, 2004), or that there is no real 're-orientation' implied (Levy, 2006). Hunt (2004) suggest that SD Logic may be considered a rework of Boyd and Levy's *New Dimensions in Consumer Behaviour Analysis*, implying that it is merely "a more effective articulation rather than a new framework".

2.5.6.3 Marketing as a Science

For more than 40 years, the argument about whether Marketing is art or science has been well rehearsed. The mimicry of the natural sciences is evident in Firat Fuat's (1985: 143) observation that by accepting temporal and contextual facts and truths as universal and eternal truths' this presented marketing as an ideal ideological vehicle for deconstruction. The inference here is that "ideology represents implicit belief systems and values that are woven within the normal social and linguistic practices of groups" Hackley (2003:1325) namely the rhetorical strategy in marketing management discourse.

However, it is a significant fact that the top Marketing journals have a 'science' orientation. Willmott (1999) criticises the assumption that there is an ontological parallel between the natural world and the social world. The 'scientism' paradox described by Willmott *op. cit.* sees the focus on the need for managerial relevance might make academic study of Marketing less relevant to practice. As Tadajewksi *(op. cit.* p.303) suggests, "the recognition of the epistemological assumptions underpinning marketing theory and academic practice has a long pedigree beginning with the German Historical School". The German Historical School, studying marketing practice in the marketplace, laid down the initial foundation stones for developing a science of marketing (Jones and Monieson, 1990). In America, The Marketing Science Institute (MSI) was founded in 1961 to "create knowledge that will improve business performance" (Lehman and Jocz, 1997:141).

2.5.6.4 The need for theory *in* marketing and *of* marketing

A distinction needs to be made between a theory *of* marketing and theory *in* marketing: the former is concerned with trying to explain the dynamics of marketing as a theory and a practice; the latter attempts to explain specific phenomena in which marketing researchers and scholars are concerned with. The need for theory to supplement the empirical evidence of practice – the analysis of experience – is essential in order to have a formal structure, to enhance understanding of the holistic marketing process, to help practitioners make better decisions and to reduce reliance on other disciplines. Alderson (1948) and Brown (1948) were the first academics calling for theoretical marketing theory, above the empirical, practical 'art'. Bartels (1951:325) claimed that marketing "can scarcely be said to have attained scientific status" because of its lack of general theories and principles.

Contributions are varied and valuable in terms of theory *in* marketing; thought and deed, theory and practice, lie at the epicentre of the debate and discussion of the need for a theory *of* marketing. And yet one single definition of *theory* is not something marketing scholars can agree on. As far back as 1946, Bartels posited the notion that there was "no *one* theory of marketing but there may be *many* theories" (p.70). Under a 'General Theory of Marketing', (Bartels, 1968) later combined seven individual theories covering: economic market separations, market roles, social initiative, flows and systems, behaviour constraints, social change and social control of marketing. Other early pioneers such as Hunt sought a theory *of* marketing which aimed at increasing "scientific understanding through a systemised structure

capable of both explaining and predicting phenomena" (Hunt, 1983:10). Bartels (1970:73), a decade earlier had distilled a possible theory framework into five fields: marketing functions; historical institutional evolution; small versus large-scale activity; integration; and specialisation. Hunt (1983) focused on four "fundamental explanada": exchange, buyer behaviour, the institutional framework to facilitate this, and the societal consequences of this activity. A theory *of* marketing would attempt to examine and explain how *all* these elements combine together; a theory *in* Marketing would concentrate on *one* of these elements.

The complexity of these individual aspects proved to be a stumbling block in any attempts at synthesising these linked but different strands into a macro-theoretical coherent framework. Bartels (*ibid* p.29) more-or-less summed up the state of play: "Traditionalists in marketing have not thought in the terminology of behaviourists who do not think as do quantifiers who do not always think as managerialists or comparativists. One is compelled to ask whether or not this is a breakdown in our knowledge of marketing, in the cohesiveness of this field of scientific endeavour".

Dependent upon philosophical orientation, theory can mean: a range of semi-applicable abstract concepts; market-oriented value propositions; a general principle of predicting and/or verifying facts; and law-like generalisations to explain phenomena. Often, because of this, an objective, scientific label is attached to marketing theory. Whilst it can be a useful way to examine commercial and social activity, it cannot be value-free and, as Venkatesh (1985:63) points out, there has been a "crisis of relevance" for some considerable time now. The two key drivers for applicable theory - better operational efficiency but also intellectual curiosity with the intention of a formulaic, consistent approach to practice seen as a liberation to marketing practitioners – are often conflicting and polarised goals. Baker (1995:20) has been influential in establishing "the recognition and acceptance of the need to improve our understanding of the manner in which the marketing system works which underlies the need to develop a workable theory of exchange". Significantly, he suggests the benefits as being the satisfaction of intellectual curiosity and improved operational performance.

Baker's (*op. cit.* p.28) summary is illustrated in *Table 2.8* below:

Table 2.8 The need for theory in marketing

Practical value	Better theories will improve managerial decision making and problem solving.
Knowledge creation	Theory provides direction and structure to academic enquiry and helps 'make sense of facts'.
Academic status	Marketing is an academic discipline. It requires its own theory It cannot rely on borrowing from other disciplines.
Intellectual curiosity	Only theory can provide the basis for understanding how the marketing system works and explaining the underlying foundations and forces

Source: Baker (1995*:*28)

The effectiveness of marketing theory to marketing practice is a central issue in the development of marketing theory. Whilst an essential advocate of the 'theory-in-use' approach', Heffering (1985: 106) questioned the "seemingly dismal performance of marketing theory". He suggested that this was because: marketing theories did not reflect the business realities or language of the user but of the builder; marketing theory often presents solutions to practical marketing problems which are too complex when practitioners want simple solutions to complex problems; marketing theories are often logically correct but impracticable. This last one throws up a number of separate problems:

i. Many theories should focus on tactics and offer advice for implementing this and not be fixated with strategy.

ii. Content relevance is the not the academic criterion but *process*.

iii. Academic theory tends to focus not on problem solving but problem formulation.

iv. There tends to be a pro-theory orientation.

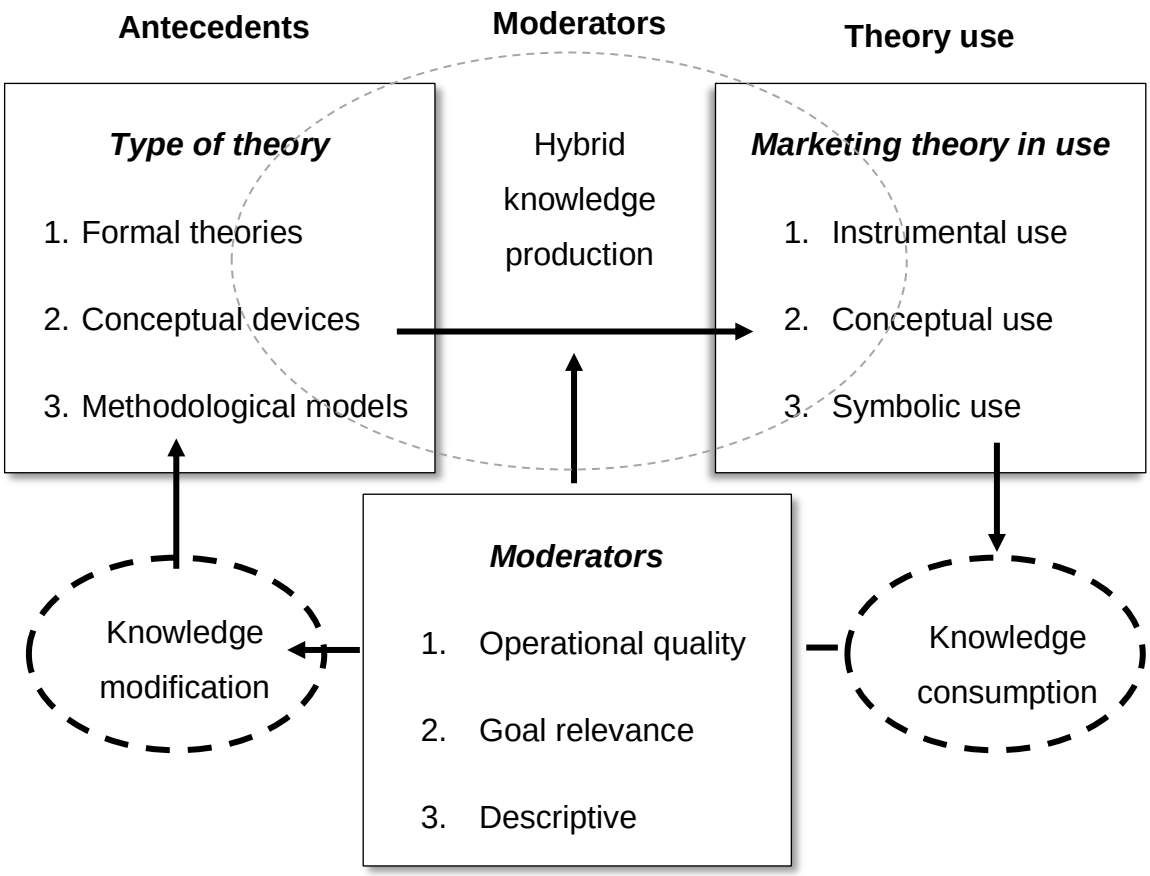
Baker (*ibid* p.41) points out "academics are not only producers of marketing knowledge, but also merchandisers, retailers and consumers of it as authors, researchers, teachers and

consultants". He stresses the need for theory as a way of anchoring marketing knowledge to set it in context as the "product life cycle of marketing knowledge is shortening and therefore the capital value of marketing knowledge has a shorter shelf life" He declares that an essential aspect in developing marketing theory "is the understanding of its historical evolution, the current knowledge base, its relative strengths and weaknesses, potential dangers and future direction".

As has been previously discussed, not only does content and context affect different perceptions and analyses of what constitutes marketing knowledge, observer perspective is critical. Rossiter's (2001) project into what constituted 'marketing knowledge' yielded four categories: marketing concepts, structural frameworks, strategic principles and research principles. Surprisingly, a framework of empirical facts and generalisations ('speculative assumptions' if you will) is entirely and, it would have to be said, erroneously omitted. Segmentation is included but not any real analysis of consumption. Cornelissen and Lock (2005:174) draw a distinction between practitioner use of marketing knowledge and that of academics: practitioners focus on action; academics focus on the relationships between concepts. They propose a typology for marketing theory generation illustrated in *Figure 2.7 Marketing theory use and the factors affecting it* below.

Within Cornellisen and Lock's framework, 'types of theory' – formal theories, conceptual devices, methodological models and methodological methods – provide a framework

Figure 2.7 Marketing theory use and the factors affecting it



Source: Developed from Cornellisen and Lock (2005:174)

consisting of *antecedents* from which theories are constructed. However, the picture presented is incomplete. The author has re-set the features cited in the original model – antecedent types of theory, theory in use and the moderators which affect knowledge production - to reflect the additional elements of hybrid knowledge, knowledge consumption and knowledge modification. [The dotted lines are indicative of the author's augmentations to the original model; the blue and pink shading are sympathetic with the development of the author's ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model***]. These augmentations emphasise the reiterative nature and hybridity of knowledge production and consumption, as well as acknowledging the

'context into text into context' modification process. This also recognises Baker's *ibid* observation regarding joint production and consumption.

Included in this inquiry are formal marketing-specific theories but also those from other disciplines. Models based on conceptual marketing thought, as well as those taken from research on methodological approaches are featured throughout, together with appropriate methods. Amongst contributions antecedent to the current debate on marketing theory, Myers *et al* (1979) identifies "context-specific" and "context-free" knowledge applying respectively to specific business situations or abstract academic theories, Charnes *et al* (1985:97) refers to "understanding" and "understanding for use". These types of theories can be further delineated as: *procedural* knowledge for action (marketing practice) which are referred to as 'methodological models'; and *declarative* knowledge or 'methodological methods' which describe quantitative data analyses. 'Moderators' here refer to the factors which affect the usability of the theory. The application of these theories is described as: *instrumental* (the technical rationality or usability of the research to a specific task); *conceptual* (aimed at general enlightenment and managerial reflexivity); and *symbolic* (for managers to legitimise the use of theory).

Research *into* Marketing is, more often than not, about searching for and extracting social meaning embedded in discourses – or discursive practice - of situation, experiences and subjective interpretation: the data *in text* and *context*. Stokes (*ibid* p.42) decsribes discourse as being "inextricably connected to what has become termed the 'linguistic turn' in the social sciences wheerin language, signs, stories, narratives and symbols among other things are seen as criucially important in creating meaning and sense-making in understanding situations and contexts". The process of building knowledge through qualitative experience conditions both practitioner and researcher perspectives; it is fundamental to qualitative research. As Silverman (2000) makes clear, it is the focus on actual practice *in situ*, on social interaction, where qualitative research is most helpful. And yet a holistic approach, with interconnection and inter-relatedness being at its core, is critical to a comprehensive examination of extant knowledge acknowledging all marketing constituencies. It is the *sine qua non* of this methodology. Its compatibility with the author's stance and ontological position – a panoptic, all-inclusive perspective – makes a qualitative approach a natural choice for the research proposed in this thesis. There could be some criticism of taking a very broad perspective in this thesis. Qualitative research allows a very flexible, panoramic framework upon which to investigate

such a complicated and complex subject matter. Connecting context with theoretical explanation is a vital element in this study. Mason's (*op. cit.* p.4) view that researchers shouldn't be limited in the scope of research but use methodologies which celebrate richness, depth, nuance, complexity and that's exactly what a qualitative approach allows.

Marketing only really developed as an academic discipline, according to Shaw and Jones (2005:269) during the 20th Century, coalescing into divergent and convergent "schools of marketing thought". They trace the metamorphosis from the conventional domain of business behaviour to the broader one of social behaviour highlighting the numerous approaches from conceptualised theories, research streams and consensus on what constituted marketing subject matter: 'traditional approaches' covering the subject matter of function, commodities and institutions; an 'interregional trade' approach; then 'marketing management', 'marketing systems', 'consumer behaviour', 'macro-marketing', 'exchange' and 'marketing history'. Whilst the practice of marketing is a highly contextualised, localised activity, marketing textbooks have often been predicated on a prescriptive, implicit systems-based model.

2.5.6.5 The purpose of marketing theory

Baker (2013: 242) reflects on the fact that theory takes on the character of its subject, arguing that theory in marketing is "fast-moving, fashionable, numbers-focused and attention-seeking… and these characteristics, to some extent, explain the problems with marketing theory". As Lovelock and Gummesson (2004:22) conclude: "Developing general marketing theory requires either integration of new lessons at a higher conceptual level than the theory already in existence, or more radically, a change in its very foundation". In pedagogical terms, "the practice is the horizon, the aim of the theory" (Gadotti, 1996:67). What this shows is that as marketing has developed, its purpose and impact is a paradox, sometimes at variance with societal needs, sometimes theory at variance with practice. Certainly, the potentially damaging "academic-practitioner" divide (Brennan, 2004) is evidence that "academics deal in theory and neglect practice while practitioners follow the conventional wisdom and mistrust theorising" (Hill *et al*, 2007:654). This was by no means a recent phenomenon; the likes of Day (1992:324) articulated what was a general concern that within academic circles "the contribution of marketing, as an *applied* discipline, to the development, testing and dissemination of strategy theories has been marginalised". The desire for a better theory of marketing is illustrated in this quotation from Alderson and Cox (1948:139): "Only a sound theory of marketing can raise the

analysis of such problems above the level of an empirical art and establish truly scientific criteria for setting up hypotheses and selecting the facts by means of which to test them". Baumol (1957:160) alludes to tacit knowledge by describing facts as "silent and therefore theory is needed to describe and explain the working of facts". This goal of the academy was then reiterated in the Marketing Science Institute's (MSI) mission to "create knowledge that will improve business performance" (Lehman and Jocz, 1997:141).

2.6 **Chapter review**

In this chapter, the first of two in *Section 2 Literature review and research design*, the philosophical foundations within which the research inquiry can be framed, and upon which a suitable methodology can be constructed, have been described and discussed. Consideration of the key research paradigms – scientific, interpretive and critical – and the respective epistemological, ontological and methodological interrelationships were seen to help justify the rationale of investigating what is often an irrational subject. An analysis of values, ideas and paradigmatic conventions formed the structure of a debate about the roots and nature of knowledge and critiqued the complementary perspectives of adopting epistemological and ontological positions in doing so. At the centre of this was the determination of what the purpose of the inquiry is, how qualitative research may be suitable for addressing the aims of the research strategy and looking for gaps in the literature. The notion of the situated knowledge of practice set against the intellectual perspectives of marketing practice of theory - the polarities of text and context - was introduced and provided a backdrop to a debate on the discourses of marketing knowledge which characterise arena within which theories and practice of marketing are formed. Ideologically-driven power relations at play in the creation of marketing knowledge were discussed demonstrating how have gained and maintained hegemony through epistemological bias. This called into question the lack of empirical research into practice and the proliferation of often contradictory prescriptions of marketing theory. Finally, in preparation for *Chapter 3 Research design: objectives, methodology and methods,* an explication of the bases of phenomenological and hermeneutic approaches, as well as an assessment of the need for self-reflexivity in research, provide a taster for a detailed discussion on objectives, methodology and methods of research design. In trying to understand the nature of the phenomenon being investigated, adopting a qualitative research methodology, anchored in the interpretive paradigm, is the most appropriate approach for an inquiry into the social aspects of marketing knowledge. At this early stage in the inquiry, this chapter is of

crucial importance in understanding the epistemological bases and values upon which theoretical and practical marketing knowledge is set and prepare the discussion for an investigation into perceived and actual disconnects between these two epistemes. It is of pivotal importance in preparation for any search into the ‘who’, ‘what’ and ‘why’ questions which need to be answered to help achieve research objectives.

3 *Chapter Three* Research design: objectives, methodology & methods

3.1 Outline of chapter

In *Chapter 2 Philosophical underpinnings of the inquiry*, the roots and rudiments of knowledge were investigated, as well as the philosophical approaches to researching the topic. An overarching goal of this work is building on previously published thoughts, adapting and augmenting extant knowledge in order to develop a new theory of how marketing knowledge is created and deployed. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the general direction of the inquiry as well as the formulation and execution of the research plan. As such, it is a discussion covering: an in-depth review outlining the key methodological direction of the research design; how looking for themes and relationships in the data is intended to be achieved; how the various marketing constituency discourses in the study are to be contextualised; and how a new 'knowledge model' may emerge from a synthesis of theoretical literature and empirical evidence grounded in practice.

It is therefore the critical focal point for this inquiry.

3.2 Introduction

The methodological dilemma of method and representation (ie: how best to plan and approach research and determining the appropriate sample of participants) is a crucial aspect of any inquiry. The theoretical perspective, which informs the methodology, provides a "context for the process and grounding for its logic and criteria" (Crotty, 2003:7). This inquiry is anchored in the interpretive paradigm, attempting to examine how and why knowledge is produced and consumed…… through the accounts of key contributors and consumers who produce, distribute and use marketing knowledge.

Attempting to capture *truthful accounts of experience* is what this inquiry is attempting to do. Gallagher (2008:67), discussing what counts as a "truthful account" in research, poses the critical question: "How do the voices of theory and the voices of 'research subjects' struggle to be heard in our research narratives?" Often, this is addressed by taking either of two approaches to research: either an external or *etic* perspective or an internal *emic* one. These descriptions were originally coined by linguist Kenneth Pike (1954) and then applied anthropologically as "etic [being a] viewpoint [which] studies behaviour as from outside a

particular system [and] the emic viewpoint resulting from studying behaviour as from inside the system" (1967:37).

An *emic* perspective is culture-specific, focused on communities, and "attempts to capture participants' indigenous meanings of real-world events" (Yin, 2010:11). Here, the experience of the participants is of paramount importance and this approach tries to "look at things through the eyes of members of the culture being studied" (Willis, 2007:100). This perspective can never comprehensively capture participants' individual experiences, and, therefore, must be supplemented by an '*etic'* perspective where universal comparisons are identified. There is, however, tension between those who advocate either of these approaches: using only an emic approach would be impossible due to the frame of reference and experiences a researcher brings to the inquiry; using only an etic approach may miss the nuances of meaning which can only be extracted from actual experience as recorded in interviews or by observation.

This is very much the aim of this inquiry: the examination of meaning contingent upon individual perception and *context*.

From the preliminary discussion on the requirements of approaches to research, it now becomes apparent that a research design which will provide an appropriate approach to addressing the research aims and objectives of this inquiry must:

- allow for interpretation of meaning;
- account for both *etic* and *emic* perspectives;
- address specific contingent contextual experience;
- acknowledge the inter-dependence of values and data in inquiry; and,
- recognise, and indeed be comfortable with, the inextricable link between the nature and content of the inquiry and the inquirer him/herself.

3.3 **Problem orientation**

A thesis on Marketing can often be more about collecting data than connecting ideas. The role of the researcher is to discover these data and determine the theories they imply (Charmaz, 2006). Examining both a conceptual and contextual perspective of marketing knowledge

production and dissemination, set within a pedagogical framework, the focus of this work is about constituency, discourse, inter-connectivity and divergence. The research problem of this inquiry focuses on the nature of marketing knowledge and the connections and disconnections implicit in terms of philosophy, principles and praxis. *It is about the roots and uses of marketing knowledge.*

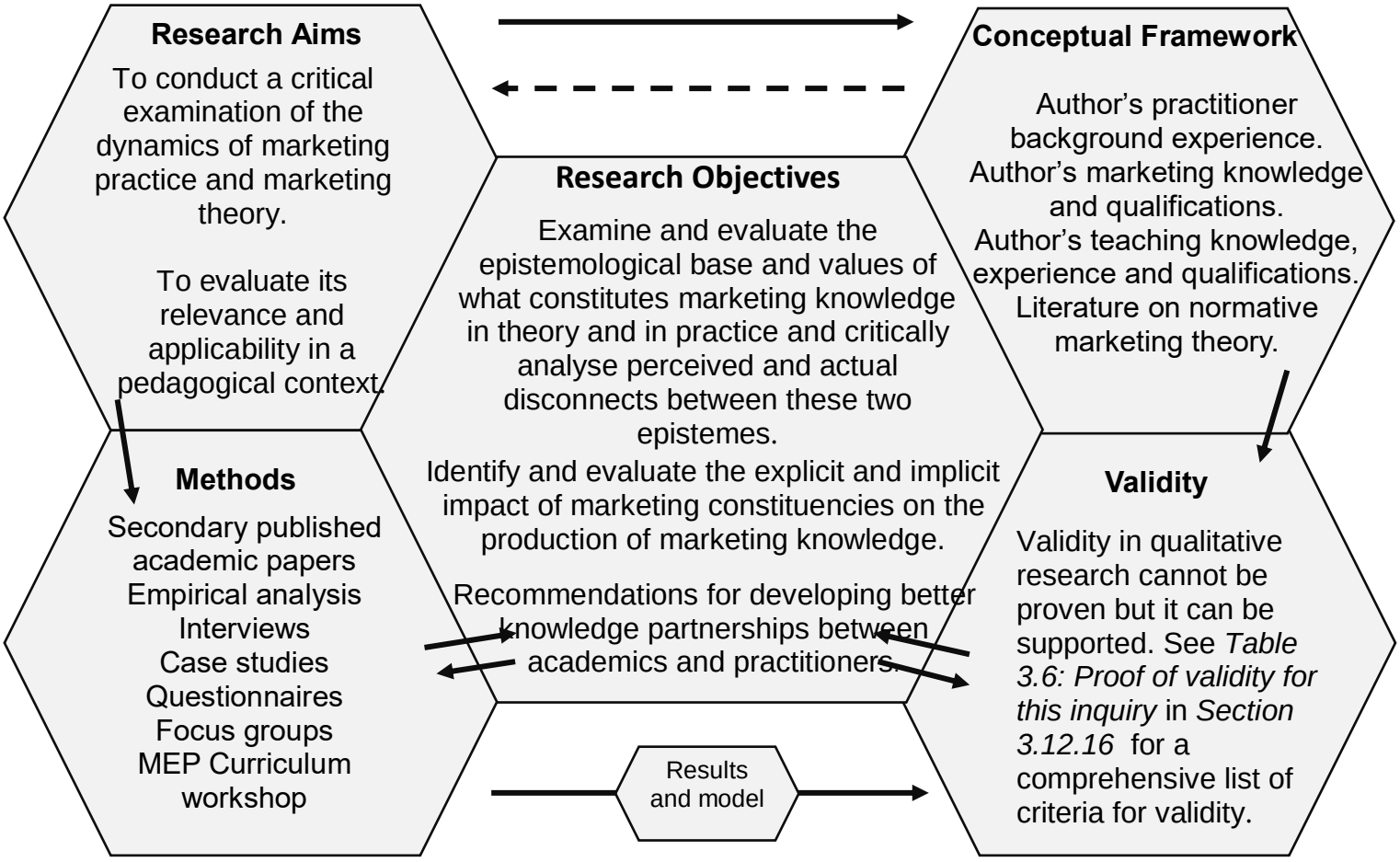
This examination of practitioner and academic epistemic orientations, with the intention of presenting an analytical and comparative account of marketing development in deed and thought, is set in historical but not chronological context, exploring the philosophical and praxeological roots and rudiments of marketing. But it must do more than that. It must attempt to critically evaluate the inputs and outputs of practice and make judgements about the effects of marketing policies.

In this context, as previously discussed, the main problem orientation of this inquiry is the phenomenological critical examination of practitioner and academic epistemic orientations, with the intention of presenting a comparative and integrative account of marketing knowledge in both text and context.

Figure 3.1 Inter-relationship between research aims, methodology, methods and outputs shows the key areas of the investigation as visualised in relation to each other in order to put the research problem in its full context. It illustrates the relationship between research aims and the conceptual framework suitable or desirable for achieving those aims. Whilst research aims are generally the start of the process, feeding into the conceptual framework to be used, the background and knowledge of the researcher informs the focus of the study, both relating to the methods used and how validity can be tested. In this case, the conceptual framework is clearly grounded in the author's expertise and experience, the received wisdom on marketing and teaching and the paradigmatic perspectives – normative and critical marketing paradigms in this case – to be researched and analysed. Research aims are then linked to specific research objectives as is the likely methods to be used to best achieve these aims and objectives. Linked to each of these stages is the need for validity; all are recursive in the sense that these

interrelated research components are changed and reiterated and reformed in order to be more appropriately applied.

Figure 3.1: Inter-relationship between research aims, methodology, methods and outputs



Source: Adapted from Maxwell (2013:10)

3.4 **Research aims**

In qualitative research, often there is a 'grand tour' question (Werner and Schoepfle, 1987) or "overarching framework" (Cameron and Price, 2009:201) designed to encapsulate the predominant aim of the inquiry. As previously stated, this thesis has *the roots and uses of marketing knowledge* as its key line of inquiry, and the aim is to conduct a critical examination of the dynamics of marketing practice and marketing theory; its purpose is to evaluate its applicability in a pedagogical context. As such, an exegesis of marketing theory and an

empirical analysis of evidence-based practice will have as its central focus the marketing theory into practice / marketing practice into theory conundrum and will explore:

- the *separation* (marketing theory and marketing practice);
- the *flows* (context to text to context: theory into practice/ practice into theory);
- the *symbiosis* (the theory and praxis of marketing pedagogy);
- and the dynamic and static (in situ/in aspic) *nature* of their duality.

  (Smith *et al*, 2016).

The research attempts to explore the connection and disconnection between extant marketing theoretical knowledge and reflexive contextualised practice as articulated through the discourses of various marketing constituents and develop a marketing knowledge model replicable and applicable in theory and in practice.

3.5 **Research objectives**

The overall research aims now need to be devised with greater specificity. They are a conduit between the broad direction of the research and the likely methods of data capture. The specific objectives of this inquiry are therefore:

i. To examine and evaluate the epistemological bases and values of what constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice and critically analyse perceived and actual disconnects between these two epistemes.

ii. To identify and evaluate the explicit and implicit impact of various marketing constituencies on the production of marketing knowledge.

iii. To make recommendations for developing better knowledge partnerships between academics and practitioners.

3.6 Brief plan of inquiry

The research combines **empirical findings** from the marketplace in the form of a phenomenological study of marketing as it is practiced and **theoretical insights** from the academic community.

(i) Design:

This inquiry is a qualitative methodology using both hermeneutics to critically interpret the published theories of the academic as well as being anchored in grounded research to analyse the empirical experience of the practitioner.

(ii) **Participants:**

The theme of the inquiry – practice and theory – is reflected in the comprehensive range of heterogenous, influential participants involved in marketing knowledge formation and use, selected from across a very broad spectrum of marketing constituencies:

- 'Contextual' marketing constituencies are represented by organisations, managers, owner/drivers, consultants and agencies involved in the *practice* of marketing.
- 'Textual' marketing constituencies are represented by Academics, Authors, Educational Institutions and Lecturers, and Professional Bodies, involved in creating and disseminating the *theory* of marketing.
- **'**Pedagogical' are represented by lecturers and students at Universities in Higher Education (HE), colleges in Further Education (FE).

All were interviewed, where possible, *in situ* in quasi-laboratory conditions.

(iii) Data collection:

Participants were interviewed in focus groups and in-depth using unstructured and semi-structured interviews, together with structured online questionnaires.

A short set of pilot interviews and questionnaires were conducted to fine-tune and confirm content, intent and appropriateness of method.

Focus groups were the main research instrument used as part of three pilot studies: CIM Technical Committee Members; HE UG student cohort; HE PG student cohort. Whilst all three were efficient ways of collecting views, opinions and general information, the real benefit, as Krueger and Casey (2000:17) is interaction which helps "participants compare their own reality to that of others".

All three focus groups were conducted in the context of the participants, namely Moor Hall, and at the designated HE institution. A limited number of focus group participants were invited to partake in several in-depth interviews designed to elaborate and extend the substance of the data captured from these sessions.

(iv) Analysis:

A phenomenological study employing a reiterative process using grounded theory and thematic data capture and analysis.

3.7 Pilot studies in preparation for research

Although 'piloting' is not always necessary in qualitative research, as a 'feasibility' study it can provide useful information and reassurance in terms of testing the particular research instrument (in this case, interviews are the main method of extracting data). Successful research does not necessarily accrue from using pilot studies, but there is a gretaer likelihood if used. They can provide useful guidelines before the full study is rolled out. Testing can be beneficial even from the point of view of establishing questions and direction of research. As well as testing the practicality of approach, early assessment of interview protocol and determination of epistemology and methodology was possible as a useful preamble to the extended exercise.

In preparation for the study, it was uncertain whether the spread of constituencies and the different types of participant would be too wide or would offer enough insight into the different knowledge domains. In order to ensure methodological rigour and provide evaluation of the appropriateness of the research approach in this inquiry, 3 pilot interviews/discussions took place prior to commencement of the research programme. This was necessary to check the veracity of the structure and content of the semi-structured interviews to come, but also to confirm that the selection and engagement with the various participants were contextually representative of those constituencies. It helped predict any likely barriers with selection of

participants. Because the eventual methodology was grounded theory, this enhanced theoretical sensitivity.

A short set of pilot interviews and questionnaires were conducted to fine-tune and confirm content, intent and appropriateness of method.

Informal discussions in the form of focus groups were conducted with the following groups:

- *Academy of Marketing Special Interest Group forum and various ad hoc individual discussions (AOMFG)*: As joint-founder of the CIM Marketing Comunications SIG, the author used the forum to conduct informal discussions in which the basic premise and content of the intended research was discussed.

- *PG Students discussions (PGSFG)*:: as part of Post-Graduate teaching sessions, general workshops took place to determine the quality and type of theoretical.practical curricula.

- *Independent Marketing Consultancies (IMCFG)*: as part of an informal network of consultants, extensive discussions took place on the themes and data requirements of the projected research programme.

In addition, presentation of the basic ideas and arguments took place at various internal and external research fora, confirming the general direction, perspective and approach taken *University Round Table Research Workshop*. One, a mock-defence of the essential argument to was awarded a prize for research; one, a presentation to an *Academy of Marketing 'Critical Marketing' Special Interest Group* resulting in the publication in the *Journal of Marketing Intelligence and Planning* of a co-written paper on the relevant subject matter which currently has been downloaded over 850 times.

3.7.1 Initial investigative parameters derived from Academy of Marketing focus group consultations

As co-founder of the Academy of Marketing 'Marketing Communications' Special Interest Group, discussions with various Conference attendees took place over the course of two days. This was then formalised into a semi-structured informal focus group involving 4 AOM academics via a SIG workshop. Topics discussed were as below.

Table 3.1 Initial investigative parameters: Academy of Marketing Special Interest Group (AOMFG)

What the Academy 'stands for' or represents'.	"Exemplar evidence of intellectual endeavour". "Representation of latest practice". "Reinforcement of a certain perspective". "Justification of stances". "Theoretical discussion". "Presenting different strands and yet at the same time consolidating silos".
Whether the Academy faithfully represented practice.	"Some great examples of digital practice being taught and theorised". "Can it be theorised?" "Not really. There is a time-lag in theory reporting what is happening in the marketplace". "Good marketers use theory and formula and process as outlined in texts. Look at Services Marketing". "Representation of latest practice is always showcased at conference and that is often regurgitated in publication". "There are hardly any practising marketeers here today. We make a big deal of reflecting what practising marketers are involved in. I don't think there are enough practitioner case studies presented".
The aspects of 'marketing knowledge' which should be investigated.	"Why theory and therefore the academic view is given so much space". "Whether it comes from the marketplace or is used by the marketplace". "Chicken and egg you mean?" "How useful theory actually is". "Do marketers use knowledge they 'know' or theory and concepts from the academic world". "The usefulness of Academic journals". "Academic journals Representation of latest practice is always showcased at conference and that is often regurgitated in publication".
The aspects of 'marketing communications' knowledge which derive from practice.	"Digital theory is short on the ground and appears to be as much about the jargon as the mechanics". "Theory is no different to existing general marketing strategy". "The philosophy of IMC is being lost to endless pre-occupation with process". "Overriding aspects like branding appears to be given less prominence than 'bounce rate', 'conversion ratios' and so on".
The way that is marketing knowledge represented in teaching.	"Theory first; application second". "Formulaic". "Teaching is seen as a 2nd class occupation to writing papers. That's the problem".

3.7.2 Initial investigative parameters derived from Post-Graduate Student cohort focus group consultations

As part of Post-Graduate teaching sessions, general workshops took place to determine the quality and type of theoretical/practical curricula. This was then formalised into a semi-structured informal focus group involving students in a focus group. Topics discussed were as below.

Table 3.2 Initial investigative parameters: *Post-Graduate Students discussions (PGSFG)*

The way that marketing knowledge is represented in teaching.	"Need for concepts and ideas". "Case studies and examples of latest practice". "Theory is important, but application reinforces it". "Theoretical and practical discussions useful". "Presenting different viewpoints not just about profit".
Did the PG Marketing Curricula faithfully represent student's business practice.	"Tutor made reference to it". "Tutor did a case study on it". "Practice highlighted marketing in action". "Looking at the philosophy behind it, the ideas, helped comprehension". "Often, theory from other sectors hasn't been applied to my sector. This helped understanding and my assignments".
Practising marketing in class	"Lecturer's experience makes theory more real". "Class exercises and discussions often as a result of student queries and this helped".
Whether students felt they helped create the curricula.	"No not really. Already established". "Content geared towards my workplace context was invaluable in helping to join the dots".

3.7.3 Initial investigative parameters derived from Independent Marketing Consultancy focus group consultations

The author belongs to an informal network of business consultants, some with extensive marketing knowledge. Comprehensive face-to-face and online discussions took place on the themes and data requirements of the projected research programme. Topics discussed were as below.

Table 3.3 Initial investigative parameters: *Independent Marketing Consultancies (IMCFG)*

Impact of marketing knowledge on their profession or career.	"Knowledge comes from interaction and expectation in relationships". "Theorised knowledge is often over-stated. Many business transactions don't really rely on concepts etc.?" "I don't read academic articles. They lose me if I'm being honest". "I graduated in Marketing and it has formed how I see strategy". "Survival – like factory gate pricing – is not helped by overblown theory". "I took marketing qualifications when my colleagues were using language I didn't understand. It was the common-sense things we did which were called something else".
The connection between theory and practice.	"We recruit for attitude and aptitude, but marketing training is often after employment". "Knowledge comes from competition, established practice in the marketplace". "I've always seen the two together. If you look at the big boys, you can see their marketing strategy even if they don't make it transparent." "Not sure how useful theory actually is. Maybe long-term strategy but not tactics so much". "It strikes me as being just like Economics. All umbers and formula. A lot of what we do – our successes – have been ad hoc or impromptu.". "Latest practice is always copied but that's by observing and imitating or adapting. Not something I'd read about". "I've been to lots of presentations and I have learnt a bit about theory at these events".
The aspects of marketing knowledge which derive from practice.	"Certainly, the language and application. Digital stuff is common sense but the hardest part is looking for actual theory and getting to understand the terms like 'bounce'". "I saw a presentation on Digital Theory and it was no different what I learned in the 90s about marketing. Relationships, segmentation, branding, audience all that sort of thing. 'Conversion ratios' are as old as the hills". "When they talk about 'brand philosophy' that's true but I need to know about process".
Does marketing knowledge theory have a role in teaching.	"Post-Grads are much more both 'Theory' and 'application' now. Training needs to be geared towards students who understand the real world". "Yes. Absolutely essential". "Teaching is better done after some experience of real-world dynamics in my opinion".

The resultant information gleaned from this preparatory period confirmed that the constituent type would offer potentially rich data and the research instrument would be suitable. This pre-testing allowed errors of direction (eg: expanding the conversations away from the focus of the study and out of the expertise zone of the participants) to be amended and described a tighter focus, helping to determine the parameters of the study. This definitely aided accuracy in the final research programme and gave confidence that the subsequent exercise would produce reliable results. In addition, some of the participants in the pilot studies expressed genuine interest in the nature of the study, offered useful insight into areas of potential (eg: stories of 'informed intuition' which was to be developed into specific 'tacit knowledge' questions); this enthusiasm was very encouraging and gave impetus to progressing the research proper.

3.8 **Selection of research participants**

Because there must be a definite link between research aims and research design (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009), 'appropriate' criteria must be applied in order to facilitate the collection of data which will fulfil research aims. Building on the research parameters of the pilot studies, the selection criteria used for targeted participants in this study complied with that of 'purposive sampling'. Ritchie *et al* (2003:77) provide the definitive guide on this approach: "members of a sample are chosen with a purpose to represent a location or type in relation to the criterion". Here, the researcher applies personal judgement in defining and selecting the sample used.

The most appropriate participants for research were chosen with the research aims in mind. The challenge in selection is reflected in the following criteria:

- the scope of the research design;
- the nature and character of the participants;
- the nature and character of the researcher;
- ethical considerations;
- the proposed data collection methods;
- the possible collaboration with participants and researcher.

- the generalisability in the selection of participants refers to whether the research findings can be generalised based on the type and nature of the participants selected; and,

- the representative nature of the sample of the constituents.

For this inquiry, the selection of a wide range of influential participants involved in marketing knowledge formation and use was selected as being representative of the main marketing discourses: theoretical, practical (and hybrid) as well as those engaged pedagogically in the production, dissemination and consumption of marketing knowledge. Selection was from as wide a spread of constituencies and as influential a group of participants as possible to try and achieve what Marshall et al (2013:20) describe as the "collective wisdom" of many heterogenous participants. In total, 40 different interviews took place from across all marketing constituencies: 3 Pilot Interviews; 2 Case Analyses; 18 Face-to-Face In-depth Interviews; 3 Focus Groups; 2 Online Interviews; 3 Online Questionnaires; as well as 1 Online Discussion.

All participants were interviewed, where possible, in quasi-laboratory conditions (ie: the natural habitus usually associated with their profession or consumption of marketing knowledge). Habitus, as defined by Bourdieu (1984:170), is "a structuring structure which organises practices and the perception of practices" which has the potential to influence actions and social perception of experience. Any insights into participant's 'meaning' of marketing knowledge had to be cognisant of this. However, because meaning is an individual interpretation, it is impossible to recreate exactly the experience of the participants of research (Charmaz, *ibid*). Because individual interpretation is a social, collective phenomenon, facts about experience, as has been asserted above (Durkhem, *ibid*), are *sui generis*: of its own kind. However, it is a vital part of subjective research to "attempt to understand phenomena through accessing meanings participants assign to them" (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991:5). Indeed, as Saunders *et al* (2007:109) argue: "It is your role as the researcher to seek to understand the subjective reality of these [social actors] in order to be able to make sense of, and understand their motives, actions and intentions in a way that is meaningful". In this respect, the assumption here is that interviewees are "knowledgeable agents who know what they are doing and can explain their thoughts, intentions and actions" (Goia, Corley and Hamilton, 2012:17).

Figure 3.2 Areas of inquiry into marketing knowledge below indicates the knowledge domains from which the selected participants have been drawn. A full account is given in *Chapters 5, 6 and 7* below, but a brief summary of participant as selected on the basis of representation of organisational or constituent type is presented here for the purposes of clarity:

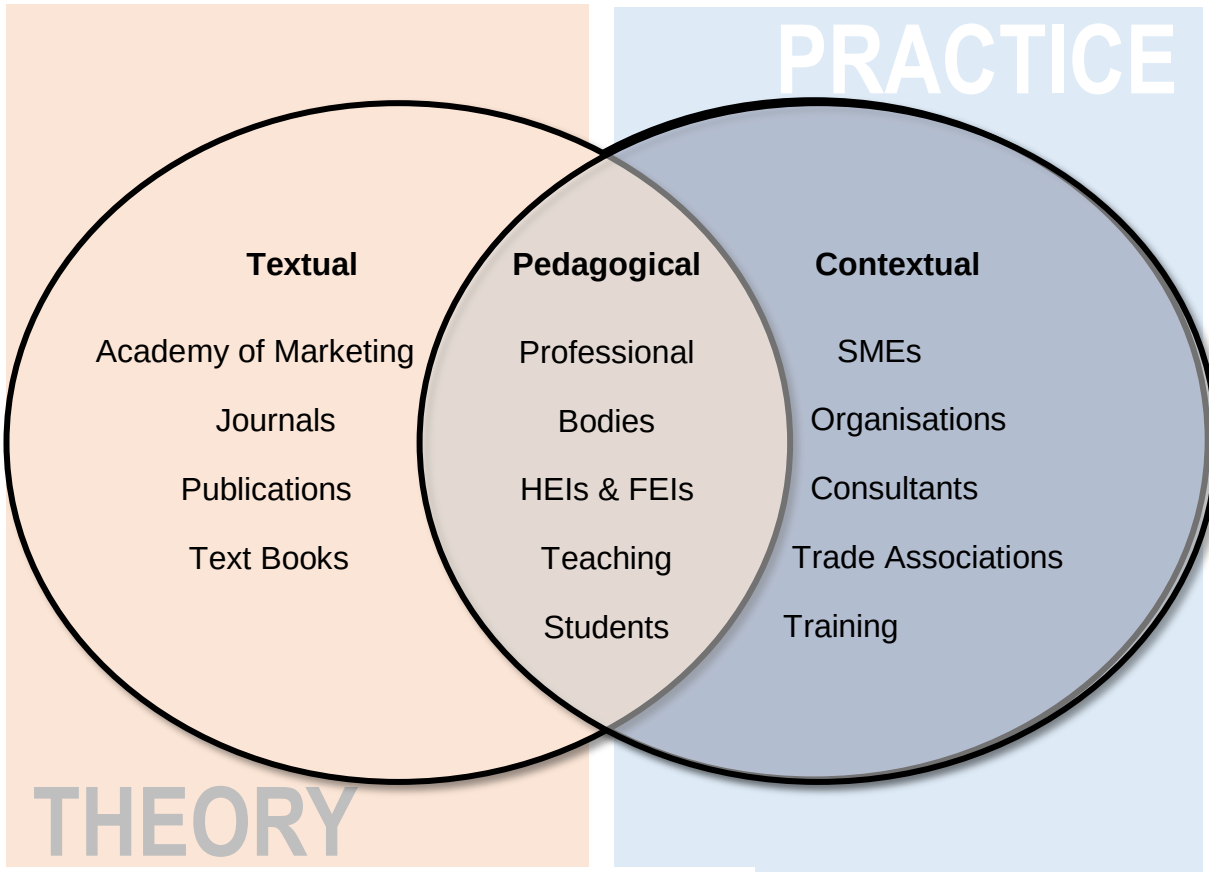
- *Contextual*: practising marketing and non-marketing consultants, SMEs, managers, executives and other practitioners.

- *Textual*: influential academics, text book authors, marketing institutions, educational distributors and marketing academy.

- *Pedagogical*: lecturers with and without practical industry knowledge, as well as students with and without practical industry knowledge.

Essential ingredients in the way this inquiry has been conducted is the researcher immersion in the dynamics of the participants' contexts and how they have not only been well-briefed on the aims of research but encouraged to be actively reflective of their perceptions and interpretations

Figure 3.2 Areas of inquiry into marketing knowledge



Source: Author's own model

of what constitutes marketing knowledge production and consumption.

This is amplified in *Figure 3.3 Data collection methods by participant type* below which shows the breadth of constituency, individual participant type, type of interview and method of data collection and analysis. It features the anonymous identification coding referred to in the empirical evidence cited in *Chapters 6, 7 and 8.*

The findings discussed in *Section 3* are a selection of some of those interviews. Those that were not used were withdrawn either because they duplicated evidence, added no real value to the work, or word count prevented use.

3.9 **Research design and methodological approaches**

Consideration of the most suitable approach to research, according to Guba and Lincoln (1994), takes precedence over instruments of data capture: that is, methodology over method. Often in investigations of this sort, the word 'research' is anathema to those exploring the phenomena of a social nature where lived experience, contingent on interaction and negotiated meaning, is the primary focus of study. As Maxwell (2013: *ix*) suggests, some "prefer the term 'inquiry' to 'research', seeing the latter as too closely associated with a quantitative or positivistic approach". As Packer and Addison (1989) suggest, four key areas must be compared as possible routes to take in our proposed inquiry:

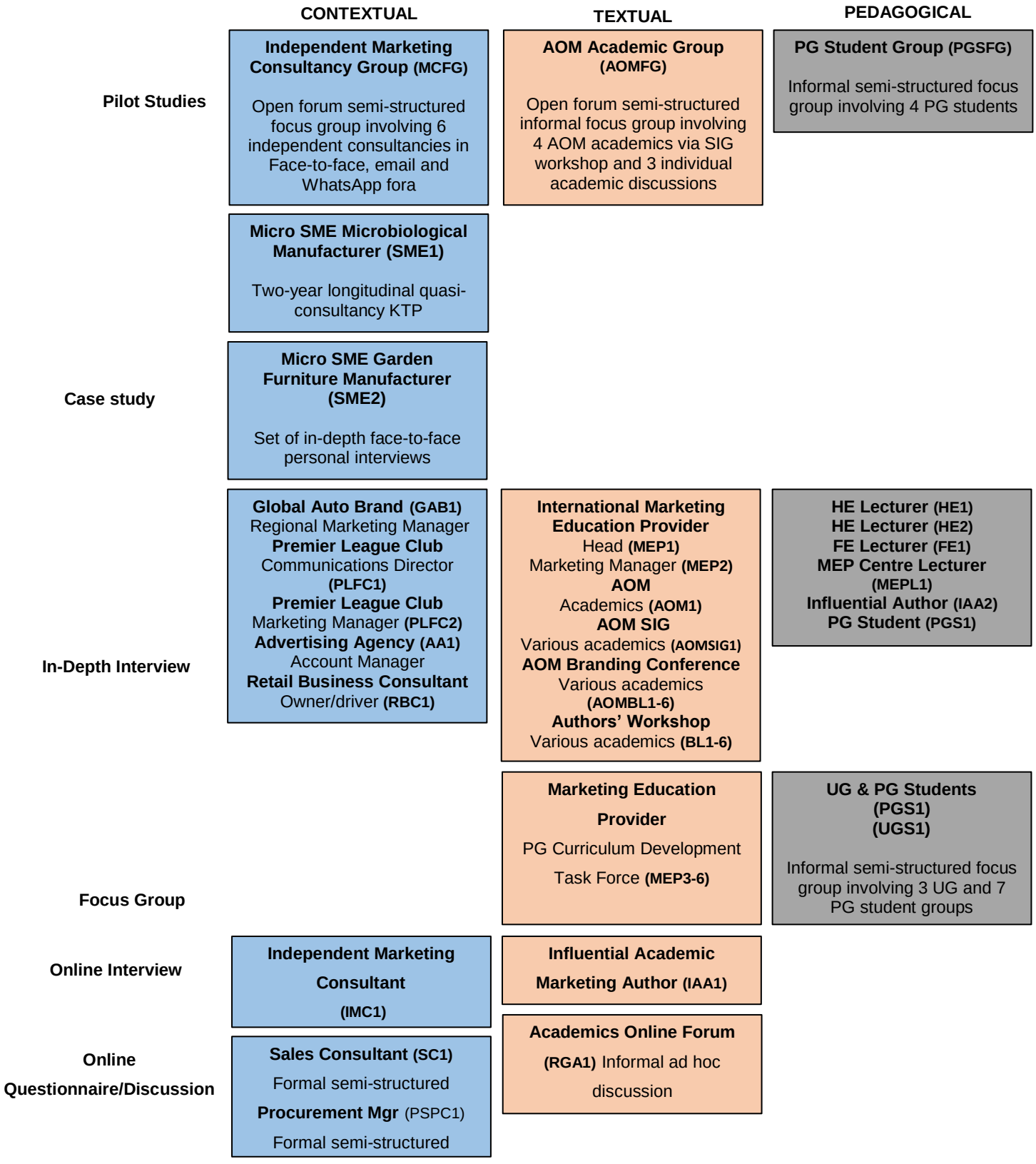
- the kind of *domain* that inquiry is considered to be directed towards;
- the *origin* or source of knowledge;
- the *form of explanation* that is seen as the goal of the inquiry: and,
- the *manner* of inquiry that is deemed most appropriate.

Where individual meaning is extracted in an inductive process of building general theory from particular contexts, and attempting to render the complexity of a situation, this is qualitative research (Cresswell, 2013). One methodological problem with this type of research is "the relationship between theory and empirical research" (Hammersley, 1989:133). Charmaz (*ibid* p.15) suggests letting the research problem shape the methods chosen but cautions against elevating methods above methodology: "Methods are merely tools... [but] They do have consequences….*How* you collect data affects *which* phenomena you will see, *how*, *where* and *when* you will view them, and *what* sense you will make of them*"*.

Epistemology dictates the theoretical perspective which is implicit in the research question; in turn, methodology will inform research methods of data capture and analysis. Developing an appropriate methodology to address a research problem affects researchers at all levels (Bryman and Bell, 2011) and is a critical factor in both academic development (Saunders *et al*, 2007) and the production of research practice (Crotty, 1998). When 'the research design', is referred to, this is describing the framework within which this research is set: a cogent rationale for collecting and analysing appropriate data. This helps us explore and examine how meaning

is constructed and maintained by specific groups (in this case, academics, practitioners, teachers and students constitute these stakeholders).

Figure 3.3 Data collection methods by participant type



Source: Author's illustration

Qualitative research, particularly that of a phenomenological nature, can offer explanation rather than description, providing better insight into knowledge normally shrouded in received wisdom. Examining subjective perceptions gained inductively through qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups and observation is a proven strategy for inquiries of this type.

Guba and Lincoln's *op. cit.* (1994: 216-217) comprehensive list of qualitative research criteria, together with a version by Ely *et al* (1991), provide an excellent framework within which to consider qualitative research. *Table 3.4 Characteristics of qualitative research applied to this inquiry* demonstrates how the key ingredients of this inquiry are consistent with these characteristics, giving a definitive justification for using qualitative research and providing the essence of the methodology adopted.

Table 3.4 Characteristics of qualitative research applied to this inquiry

Guba and Lincoln (1998)	**Ely *et al* (1991)**	**Application to this inquiry**
Human behaviour cannot be understood without the meanings and purposes attached to activities by human actors.	Events can be understood adequately only if they are seen *in context*. Therefore, a qualitative researcher immerses her/himself in the setting.	Taking a 'panopticon' perspective of the research and appreciating the context(s) within which knowledge is created and implemented is an essential part of this inquiry.
Research which only gives an etic (outsider) perspective and not an emic (insider) perspective will not produce rich data.		The inquiry proposes, and indeed adopts, both *emic* and *etic* approaches to enable the researcher to be immersed in the research and observe behaviour and meaning-making.
Often general data is not applicable to individual cases (known as the 'nomothetic/ideographic' disjunction).	Qualitative methods are appropriate as there is no one general method.	A range of qualitative approaches – grounded research, hermeneutic, phenomenological, and case analysis – have been adopted as appropriate to individual constituents and their contexts.

There is an exclusion of the source of the hypotheses in quantitative research, an absence of understanding "the discovery process".	The contexts of the inquiry are not contrived; they are *natural*. Nothing is predefined or taken for granted.	The meanings negotiated by the participants have been allowed to emerge from the data rather prove a pre-determined theory.
The need in quantitative research to keep theory and facts separate ("theory-ladenness of facts"), is not realistic and the two are not *in*dependent but *inter*dependent.	Qualitative researchers attend to the experience holistically, not as separate variables. The aim of qualitative research is to understand experience as unified.	Methodology is grounded in the experience of the participants Empirical evidence and published theory are combined 'on the page', consistent with this method of data analysis.
There is a problem of 'induction' ("under-determination of theory") whereby facts support theory and it is never possible to arrive by induction at a single ineluctable theory.		A theory-led approach has been resisted with an open-mind to actor's and motivations rather than draw out a theory.
Just as theory and facts are inter-dependent in qualitative research, so too are values and facts (ie: the "value-ladenness of facts") and the value-free objectivity claimed in quantitative approaches is compromised.	Qualitative researchers want those who are studied to speak for themselves, to provide their perspectives in words and actions.	The notion that participant's testimony is value-free is rejected and experiential evidence of the individual is interpretive and then interpreted by the researcher.
There is (and needs to be) interactivity between the inquiry and the inquirer (known as the "inquirer-inquired dyad").	The process entails appraisal about what was studied. Qualitative research is an interactive process in which the persons studied teach the researcher about their lives.	The nature of some of the methods used – interviews, focus groups and case analysis – necessitates an interactive approach.

Source: Developed from Guba & Lincoln (1994); Ely Anzul, Freidman, Garner & Steinmetz (1991)

The proposal is to synthesise a range of qualitative approaches – grounded research, hermeneutic phenomenology, and ethnography (case analysis) – in an immersive, 'panopticon', inside and outside (emic and etic) perspective of the participants' place of action

to evaluate contextual, experiential 'meaning'. Similarly, empirical evidence and published theory are integrated 'on the page' and reiterated, consistent with the iterative method of data analysis.

3.9.1 **The appropriateness of inductive qualitative research in marketing inquiry**

Despite the debate between choice of either quantitative or qualitative research approaches, according to Campbell (cited in Miles and Huberman, 1994:40), "all research ultimately has a qualitative grounding". Indeed, as Gummesson (2003:482) asserts: "Let's stop fooling ourselves. All research is qualitative". Either way, it requires skill in analysis and a systematic, rigorous methodology. Qualitative research involves "the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical methods – case analysis, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, cultural texts and productions, along with observational, historical, interactional and visual texts - that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individual's lives" Lincoln and Denzin, 2011:4) However, the difficulty of establishing qualitative research in marketing (Gummesson, 2005) is attributable to the lack of definition of what qualitative research actually is (Symon and Cassell, 2004).

Qualitative research, according to Alveson and Deetz (2001:55) "may be defined as research aiming at reducing ambiguity through transforming perceptions into pre-structured quantifiable categories". Its most valuable characteristic is the "expressed commitment to views, events, actors, norms and values from the perspective of the people being studied" (Bryman, 1988:61).

As Wertz (2011:3) asserts: "Qualitative analyses are not the mere application of technical procedures; they are not simply additional tools for the researcher's toolbox. When properly practised, such analyses require a unique qualitative stance and world view". Indeed, as Sherman and Webb (1988:7) suggest, qualitative research, "implies a direct concern with experience as it is "lived" or "felt" or "undergone" with the aim of understanding experience as nearly as possible as its participants feel it or live it". Denzin and Lincoln (2011:8) suggest that qualitative research "implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that aren't experimentally examined or measured… [and] qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry". This study is essentially a phenomenological study, something described by Cresswell (1998:51) as gathering 'deep' information and perceptions of the 'lived experience'.

Lived experience is a term in qualitative research derived from the German word *erlebnis* meaning 'immediate experience' as opposed to 'conceptual knowledge'. This is of crucial significance in terms of understanding the research aim of examining the epistemological bases and values of what constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice outlined above.

Silverman (1993) argues that it is not about meaning but practices. Palmer (1994:109) gets closer to the truth in describing qualitative research as "exploration and interpretation". The qualitative research paradigm elicits participant accounts of meaning, experience or perceptions, producing descriptive data (De Vos *et al*, 2002:79). Qualitative research is "ideographic, holistic and typically aimed at understanding social life and the meanings that people attach to it" (Schurnink, 2004:14), emphasising and valuing human interpretive aspects of exploring the social world (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004:8). Mason (2002:1) makes a strong case for the richness and nuance of qualitative research through which "we can explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life, the understandings, experiences and imaginings of our research participants, the ways that social processes, institutions, discourses or relationships work and the significance of the meanings they generate".

Needing to be close to the action, as it were, is essential. Being an 'insider researcher' – with knowledge and experience of the domain being investigated – is simultaneously difficult and advantageous for the researcher: exposed to the subjectivity of interpretation; knowledgeable of the dynamics. Indeed, as Drake (2011:36) points out: "Insider researchers are often attracted by three specific methodologies: grounded theory, action research and case study". Qualitative research addresses the 'what' and 'how' questions, and, in this respect is in its purest form led by an inductive approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), where "patterns, themes and categories of analysis … emerge from the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (Patton, 1980:306).

This approach requires a lot of 'detective work', sifting through transcripts, looking for clues in the data, comparing codes for themes from which a theory, a concept, hopefully a new perspective will surface. This is evident in the iterative nature of the data analysis, interpretation and emergence of a knowledge process model.

However, because of the exploratory nature of an inductive approach to research, there has been a positivist tendency to consider the use of induction as a mere precursor to deduction (Welch *et al*, 2013:252). Gubrium and Hostein (1997:200) suggest this very notion, that naturalistic qualitative researchers could do this by "considering the contingent relations between the 'whats' and 'hows' of social life". Inductive approaches offer flexibility, space for the development of theory, conceptualisation and contextualisation of phenomena. Guba and Lincoln (*ibid* p.106) comment on what they describe as the "disjunction of grand theories with local contexts" in reference to the 'etic/emic dilemma'. They suggest that qualitative data are useful for uncovering emic (insider) views but should be qualitatively grounded. This is developed in detail below in *Section 3.9.3. The difficuties with interpretation.*

3.9.2 **Interpretivism and social constructionism and the importance of subjectivity**

Often qualitative research is described not by what *it is* but by what *it is not*. Interpretivist methodologies reject hypotheses, a monotheistic, theoretical perspectives but instead presents experiential accounts of specific phenomena in order to interpret socially constructed negotiated meaning amongst participants. The rejection of philosophical monism, the 'interpretive turn', is an established premise of interpretivist research. The imperative for separation between interpretivism and the natural sciences is captured by Lang (1967:53) who pinpoints the internal logic of human action: "there is an ontological discontinuity between human beings and things… persona are distinguished from things in that persons experience the world whereas things behave in the world". It compares empirical evidence with theoretical constructs expressed through the literature. Some of the research approaches include:

- *thematic analysis* (examining emerging themes to understand contextual meaning);
- *narrative inquiry* (individual oral or written accounts to give individual perspectives);
- *discourse analysis* (analysing the written word in texts and transcripts);
- *ethnography* and *case* analysis (an insider's perspective using participant observation and interviewing to immerse in the culture being examined).

Gummesson (2000) advocates a close relationship between researcher and research, stressing the need for involvement rather than detachment. Whilst it is desirable to be cognisant of the individual researcher's relationship to the research inquiry, caution should be taken to ensure

a degree of objectivity. When investigating a subjective phenomenon, Interpretivism puts far greater emphasis on the researcher's ability to try and remain objective. By its very nature, this inquiry draws on a range of individual interpretations and a multiplicity of marketing meanings and this will therefore be best elucidated from subjective research.

3.9.3 **The difficulties with interpretation**

Qualitative research, according to Boodhoo and Purmesseur (2009:1), "has been described as a soft science since it is a subjective and not directly quantifiable in contrast to quantitative research which is a hard science" And yet, as Yin (1994:16) points out: "Paradoxically, the 'softer' a research strategy, the harder it is to do". With interpretivist research, the search for 'knowledge' is more difficult. Interpretivists argue that knowledge is not *found*, rather it is constructed through subjective meaning-making. Knowledge is "always already there" (Crotty, 1998:44). Qualitative research *is* interpretation and this requires, as Herder puts it, *Einfühlung* (imaginative reproduction) or "feeling one's way in". This implies that interpretation requires the interpreter to perform some sort of imaginative reproduction of an author's meaning - internal sensations (this is an important aspect of Herder's notorious thesis that interpretation requires interpretation). Charmaz (*ibid* p.37) rejects neutral observational language claiming it to be "both a quixotic rhetorical device and a contradiction in interpretive work". She describes this as co-produced research as there is social interaction between researcher and the phenomenon being researched and this "produces data and therefore the meanings that the researcher observes and defines" (*op. cit.* p.525).

The nature of the researcher as well as the nature of the research needs to be considered: there is a danger in interpretation. It can be contested whether themes present themselves or are imagined. Caution must be exercised with this approach; the seductive nature of inductive methodology can effect a kind of pareidolia, where patterns, themes and relationships are imagined.

In subjective research, there is a fine line between validity and verisimilitude of interpretation: what appears to be true and legitimate can be distorted by subjectivity. In qualitative research, validity cannot be proven, but it can be supported. Although neutrality in inquiry is almost impossible, it is incumbent on the researcher to look for assumptions – both of the researcher and the research participants – hidden in the data. This acts as a cautionary check as this work is progressed.

In other words, *empirical* reality is not being captured but an *interpretation* of empirical reality. Further still, in some instances researchers are interpreting participant's *interpretations* of tacit knowledge. As the overall objective of this work is to take a panoptic perspective of how marketing knowledge is generated, and how it is both reported and recycled, an interpretative structure with an inductive approach is adopted using a constructivist methodology, and it aims to be both emic and etic in its ethnographic immersion of the narratives of the constituents' experiences, echoing Lee and Lings' (2008:6) observation that "research is about generating knowledge about what you believe the world is". Heidegger's *ibid* ''hermeneutical circle' referred to earlier, alludes to a pre-existing, communally-informed 'interpretation' which equates almost to *a priori* knowledge. But whilst reality relates to the rationality of previous experience (Jankowitz, 2005), inductive reasoning follows the chain of events as they unfold and reveal truth and knowledge (Zikmund *et al*, 2010). However, it is only an interpretation of the truth and what constitutes knowledge seen through the "perceptual filters in interpretation" (Voros, 2005), through the "subjective meaning in social action" (Bryman and Bell, 2007:728).

A cautionary note must be expressed when considering data interpretation and the presentation of the empirical evidence of experience: whilst it is incumbent upon the inquirer to drive the process, to look for clues from the research, it is of paramount importance there is a need to be aware of contextualising researcher subjectivity. Qualitative research allows researchers to interpret and draw meaning from personal experience (Mason, 2002:1), and that's exactly what the essence of this work is. And yet, as researcher, the author is aware of being locked in that reflective 'hermeneutic circle': the experience of interpreting experience and the circularity of learning juxtaposed and yet symbiotic. Here, this refers to all understanding being context-dependent, components of knowledge being independent but interdependent, separate but part of the whole. Understanding is therefore circuitous as well as circular and this comes from interpretation of the micro by understanding the holism of the macro.

The author's writings, teaching and nearly all reading and experience of marketing have consistently been drawn to a relativist view that marketing knowledge, like all social meaning, is culturally constituted and it is the culture and cultures of marketing – the paradigms and constituencies – which will be examined here. However, the critical realist also acknowledges the ever-present hand of one's expertise and experience on the shoulder of truth. Humphrey (2007:13) discusses this very dilemma when she examines the nature of the 'insider-outsider duality' of the 'insider ethnographer' and how she responded to this "came to be crucial to

[her] reflexivity as a researcher". Hellawell (2006:483) describes an 'insider researcher' as "an individual who possesses intimate knowledge of the community and its members" Naples (2003: 6) describes insider research as "the study of one's own social group or society". An earlier definition by Merton and Storer (1973) is more useful claiming that an insider has *a priori* intimate knowledge of a community.

This objective/subjective contradiction is evident in this research, something which the author has to remain aware of throughout the research process.

Understanding and interpretation are inextricably bound together. Gadamer (1960:389) declared that "understanding occurs in interpretation" which takes place with an individual 'horizon' (ie: all within a person's perspective), but this horizon can be extended beyond our interpretation. There is, therefore, never a definitive definition of interpretation (Annells, 1996). Because of the subjective nature of qualitative research, and its characteristic creative element, applying scientific rigour or validity criteria as with quantitative methods can be difficult. Validity criteria for this inquiry is comprehensively covered in *Section 3.10.15* below.

3.9.4 **Power asymmetry in the qualitative interview**

The qualitative interview, if conducted properly, should be more like a dialogue: a conversation between two equal partners. And yet power in discourse is constantly negotiated and constructed between participants (Thornborrow, 2002). There may be features such as control, constraining others' viewpoints and enforcing one's will on another (Wang, 2006) within the qualitative interview. However, the power imbalance in the interview methodology, distortion through unintended influences either in researcher or participants (inherent subjectivity or bias), requires reflexivity by the interviewer. Asymmetrical power, evident in the dynamics of the interview, the focus of discussion and, in the interviewer's case, the analysis and interpretation of the data, may skew the quality of the interview. Finlay (2002: 209) identifies five types of reflexivity - introspection, inter-subjective reflection, mutual collaboration, social critique and discursive discussion – which can be used to "enhance the trustworthiness, transparency and accountability of research". A 'reflexive journal' which may be used to help record the perceptions of the interviewer should be part of a qualitative research design.

3.9.5 **The iterative nature of qualitative research**

Social science involves a constant reassessment of what may constitute meaning. According to Giddens (1984), "all social actors, it can properly be said, are social theorists who alter their theories in the light of experience". This "double hermeneutic" (Giddens, 1993: 154) describes interpretation of an already interpreted experience: a *subject-subject* reflexive relationship with the subject being investigated. Qualitative research, the integration and synthesis of both data collection and reflexive analysis, is an iterative process which "should be fluid and flexible, following the data, theory emerging rather than a rigid, sequential structure" (Mason (2002:16). Berkowitz's (1997) description of a "loop-like pattern of multiple rounds of revisiting the data as additional questions emerge, new connections are unearthed, and more complex formulations develop along with a deepening understanding of the material".

The essence of good research is the effort put into analytical reflexivity. Therefore, the role of iteration in qualitative research is, as Srivastava and Hopwood (2009:76) suggest, key to developing meaning through insightful inquiry "not as a repetitive mechanical task but as a reflective process".

3.9.6 **Interdependence of ontology, epistemology, methodology and method**

Whilst there is a level of consensus on the relational aspects of epistemology and ontology, there are positions which are incommensurable. Those, like Gregory (2000:226), argue that "ontology is grounded in epistemology", or like Smith (1996:18) that "ontological claims without an epistemological warrant is dogma". Counter views such as "ontology logically precedes epistemology" (Hay, 2006:8) maintain that the nature of the context within which knowledge is to be acquired must inform our epistemological position (ie: what we *can* know).

In an interpretivist inquiry, the ontological perspective is that there can be multiple realities and that these can be changed dependent upon how they are viewed by the researcher. Realities are not more or less true but more or less informed (Denzin and Lincoln, *op.cit.*). Here, epistemologically speaking, the relationship between knowledge and knower is inseparable and not, therefore, value-free. From a methodological perspective, meaning ay evolve between the researcher and the participants of research.

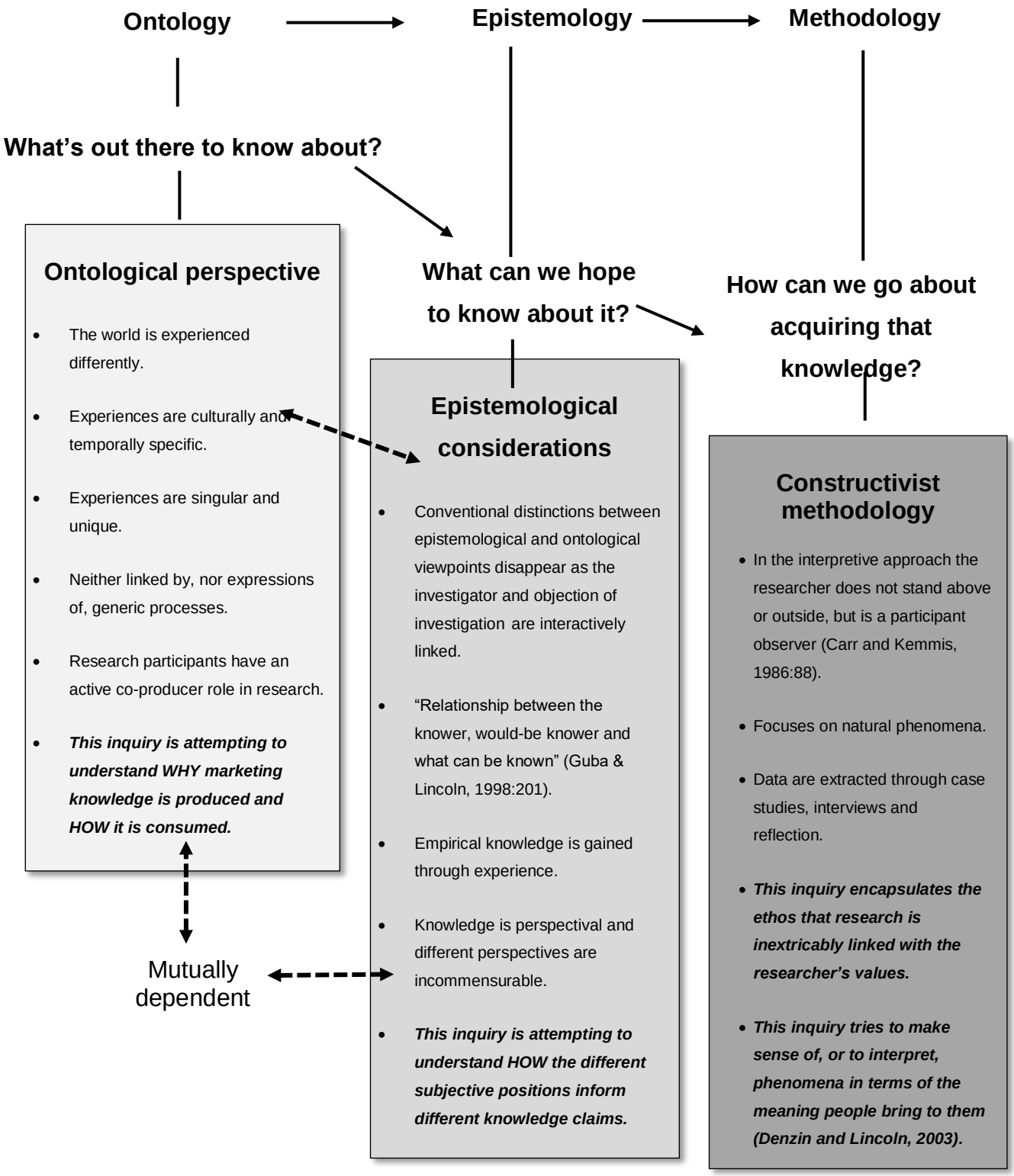
Smith *op.cit.* concedes that he sees neither ontology nor epistemology as "prior to the other, but instead see the two of them as mutually and inextricably interrelated". However, it is important to establish the directional dependence between ontology, epistemology and methodology, as well as examining the relationship between methodology and method in the research plan: they are all interconnected but they are separate entities.

The framework within which knowledge is perceived and investigated - research methods, methodology, epistemology and ontological position – impact on one another and help formulate research practice. Each research method can be traced back through its research methodology and epistemology to an initial ontological position. Denzin (1970) comments on the interrelationship of theory and method and that every method has a different relevance to theory. This is referred to as the research paradigm described by Guba and Lincoln (1994:105) as: "a basic system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways".

There is often an erroneous amalgam of methodology and methods: a confusion of two linked but separate conceptual elements which are scientific investigatory tools (methods) and the underlying principles which determine their deployment and eventual interpretation (methodology). Methodology is a preamble and pre-requisite to method; it is the philosophical foundation upon which research methods sit. When a methodological position is declared, individual perspectives of the nature of reality are also declared. Indeed, Quinlan (2011) places fundamental research philosophies at its foundation (as Crotty (1998) had done before him) stating that epistemology informs theoretical perspective, which in turn feeds methodology and ultimately methods of data collection.

Therefore, the appropriate method of empirical inquiry is both informed *and* constituted by the basic philosophical premises or philosophical 'commitments' upon which the inquiry is based. Philosophical commitments are a necessary step in research design, but they can be challenged because an assumption is always made about what constitutes knowledge: the nature of what is being studied (ontology); how the researcher can have knowledge of the subject being investigated (epistemology); and why this particular study is studied (axiology).

Figure 3.4 Directional dependence of ontology, epistemology and methodology



Source: Developed from Hay (2002:314)

In this inquiry, the underlying premise (or philosophical commitment) is that for any belief to have meaning, it must be anchored in the real world, a product of the empirical evidence of experience. If these philosophical commitments are confused with merely being research *tools*, their significance is compromised.

Sobh and Perry (2005:1194) make the connections for us here: "Essentially, ontology is reality, epistemology is the relationship between that reality and the researcher and the methodology is the technique used by the researcher to discover that reality". Therefore, 'methodology' is an account of the theoretical foundation of a research inquiry and 'methods' the range of tools used to collect and analyse the data. And yet, as Charmaz (*ibid* p.15) argues, researchers must "see through the armament of methodological techniques and the reliance on mechanical procedures". In simple terms, methodology is essentially about how logic, reality, values and what constitutes knowledge inform research; methods are the techniques and procedures followed to conduct research and are determined by the methodology (McGregor and Murname, 2010:419).

Hay's (2002:314) model showing the interrelationships and directionality of the three components has been developed above in *Figure 3.4* and applied to the development of the methodology used for this inquiry. Applying this to this inquiry:

- the ontological perspective is attempting to understand WHY marketing knowledge is produced and HOW it is consumed;
- epistemological considerations attempt to understand HOW the different subjective positions inform different knowledge claims; and,
- the constructivist methodology encapsulates the ethos that research is inextricably linked with the researcher's values.

The author subscribes to the view that whilst ontology may be the starting point of the thinking process, it is inextricably linked with epistemology in the execution of the research process. As Stoker and Marsh (2002:11) suggest, "ontology is concerned with what we can know about the world and epistemology is concerned with how we can know it". That is the driving force of this inquiry.

3.9.7 **Possible approaches to research and rejection of unsuitable methodologies**

Whilst "ontology logically precedes epistemology" (Hay, *op.cit*), adopting methodological steps without "a coherent epistemological stance weakens the methodological potential for theory innovation" (Tavory and Timmerman, 2014: 12). So too the presence of the researcher is immersed in the research process in personal reflexivity. Mason (2002:13) offers the following list of suggested questions which help the researcher to adopt a research method appropriate to personal perspective and the requirements of the inquiry:

1. What is the social reality of the phenomena to be investigated?
2. What might represent knowledge or evidence of the social reality to be investigated?
3. What broad area of research is the research concerned with?
4. What is the intellectual puzzle and the specific questions to be explored?
5. What, and for whom, is the purpose of the research?

The first two questions – which concern ontology and epistemology – are, as Mason suggests, aimed at the researcher. The "broad area of study" should be an extension of the ontological and epistemological stance taken by the researcher; the "intellectual puzzle" should be set in the context of the researcher's experience; and, finally, that the intention of the research should be to add to knowledge not engaging in research for research sake.

As the assumptions of possible methodological approach are dictated by ontology and epistemology, what selection criteria must be deployed to ensure a rigorous approach to the research process? According to McGrath (1981:179), it can be viewed "as a series of interlocking choices in which we try simultaneously to maximise several conflicting desiderata ... viewed not as a set of problems to be solved but rather as problems to be lived with". His peculiarly "dilemmatic" view of the research process, balancing alternatives, puts the emphasis on research *choice* as opposed to research *problem*.

This element of decision-making involved in choosing methodological options – personal choice rather than paradigmatic problem – is a crucial pivot in this inquiry.

The two main approaches to research – quantitative and qualitative – work from different perspectives: one working *within* a theoretical framework and the other trying to *establish* a theoretical framework. Contrasts between these alternatives have been described as being rationalistic (quantitative) and naturalistic (qualitative) paradigms (Guba and Lincoln, 1982) and as "inquiry from the outside" and "inquiry from the inside" (Everard and Lewis, 1981). Participant observation and unstructured interviewing, used in this inquiry, where practitioners provided an authentic 'internal' view, is a proven route to faithful testimony.

In a qualitative study, "research design should be a reflexive process" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:24). It is also an inductive process: data *precedes* the construction of theory; In contrast, the aim with quantitative research is to test *existing* theory; this is a deductive process. Deduction is essentially a hypothesis-testing methodology of proof undertaken *before* research takes place, whereas induction tries to discover relationships *after* research has taken place. A deductive approach relies on empirical observation and requires indicators in order to measure. Here, only observable data that can be collected is considered and, consequently, for those subscribing to a deductive approach, subjectivity is considered an insufficient basis for evaluation. Deduction starts with a general, situational, universally-applied law and applies it to the specific. An inductive approach collects fragments from a range of perspectives and tries to connect to a general view, eschews corroborating or falsifying theory but, as Gray (2009:15) states: "attempts to establish patterns, inconsistencies and meanings". These are concepts from elementary logic and are vitally important in research selection, helping to "link together the 'thinking' parts of research with the 'getting out there and doing' parts" (Lee *ibid*, p.6). However, as Slife and Williams (1995:9) remind us: "even in wanting to escape theory, to be open-minded or wanting to believe that theorising was unimportant to science, we would be practising a theory".

Therefore, what can be established is that where evaluation and understanding of phenomena is the goal of research, where an approach which builds a theoretical foundation rather than test an existing theory, a qualitative methodology is most appropriate. In addition, where there is an appreciable element of reflexivity based on actual researcher experience which will involve synthesising conceptual and contextual knowledge, an inductive method is most appropriate.

Because the premise of this work is that all knowledge is contingent on context, space and time, the methodology is clearly in opposition to the positivist view that knowledge is something

above contingent human actions. It is an anti-essentialist perspective which is grounded in the social construction of meaning, discursively reinforcing that external conditions affect action, interaction and social meaning.

To reiterate Alvesson and Sköldberg's (*ibid*: p.5) view, "it is not methods but ontology and epistemology which are the determinants of good social science" and this is better handled by qualitative research as it allows for ambiguity as regards interpretive possibilities". As Burrell and Morgan (1979:2) suggest, this is the way "one attempts to investigate and obtain knowledge of the social world". Whilst these two approaches are not entirely mutually exclusive, an inductive approach is exactly what the objective of this work sets out to examine: *patterns, disconnections and shared meanings contingent to specific situations*.

In the context of this work, the three essential research components are threaded together in a cohesive, synergetic strategy: an interpretivist epistemology with a constructivist, subjectivist ontological position, linking theory and research methodology with an inductive approach.

This was considered as a suitable method to adopt for this project. However, due to the need for the researcher to be fully submersed in a particular phenomenon over a considerable period of time, the only element of this inquiry which was deemed to be suitable for was a two-year KTP partnership presented as a case analysis in *Section 4.4 The empirical evidence of contextual marketing constituencies*. This took the form of a quasi-consultancy in which the author 'lived' in the host company's environment every week for two years and observed and analysed the way the company operated, its culture, processes and so on.

At each stage of the process of thinking about a research topic, examining a possible methodological approach and deciding on the most suitable methods of data capture analysis, consideration of a quantitative approach to this inquiry has always been rejected. Research into marketing evidences a limited amount of practitioner research into knowledge production and application due to the difficulty of access and interpretation and often the reliance on over-reductionism. Gibb and Davies (1990:6) argue that "the emphasis is on formalistic deductive rather than inductive heuristic approaches". Consequently, quantitative methods are not likely to yield understanding of contingent experience, whereas "qualitative work carries its meaning in its entire text…its meaning is in the reading" (Richardson and St. Pierre *op. cit.* p.959). Rossiter *et al* (2009:1) refer to the "balkanization" of academic marketing quantitative modelling and consumer behaviour has diminished research into strategic marketing issues".

The reasons for rejecting quantitative research methods as unsuitable for this inquiry are:

- Positivists view reality as 'out there' to be apprehended (Denzin and Lincoln *op. cit.*), a 'received' knowledge (Polkinghome, 1983) which is separate from value or viewpoint.

- Quantitative methods are inappropriate for studies examining human beings and their lived-in experience as the phenomenon of meaning-making is largely ignored.

- It seems appropriate that qualitative researchers are cautious of quantifying complex and context-bound observations that may only be irreducible to numbers (Richards, 2005).

- Quantitative research is often conducted without reference to context, without accounting for the lived experience of participants, without acknowledging individual interpretation of meaning.

- Often data is captured from a narrow sample where description rather than narrative is elucidated.

3.10 **Outline research methodology adopted**

The main aim of methodologies in the interpretive paradigm, according to Higgs (2001:49), is "to seek to interpret the world, particularly the social world". This is particularly relevant to this inquiry, as the essence is "embodied knowing as a determinant of social reality [and of] multiple constructed realities" (Higgs, 1998: 146).

As outlined above, the research plan (implicit in the research aims, epistemology, ontology and methods selected) for this inquiry describe:

- the need for rich, thick data (Denzin and Lincoln, *op. cit.*);

- an explanation of lived experience; and,

- the need for meaning in text and context.

For clarity, it may be useful to reiterate the 'world view' synthesised in this paradigmatic choice. As Guba and Lincoln (*ibid* p.108) state: "*Inquiry* paradigms define for *inquirers* what

it is they are about and what falls within and outside legitimate inquiry". To reiterate from above, the three critical questions here are:

- the *ontological* question regarding the nature of 'reality' (how things are and how they really work);
- the *epistemological* question which refers to the relationship between the 'knower' and what can be known; and lastly,
- the *methodological* question which relates to the best way to go about ascertaining what can be known.

With a key research aim of investigating the dynamics of practice evolution and theory generation, using empirical evidence witnessed through participant testimony and *in situ* case analysis, this kind of observation is well suited to being "close to reality, providing depth of understanding" (Carson *et al*, 2005:149). The juxtaposition of parallel engagement with relevant extant literature and empirical research benefits the investigation as it offers rigorous research bench marks specific to marketing (Gummesson, 2001; Goulding, 2005).

This is symptomatic of the 'context to text to context' *leitmotif* - practice reified by theory - consistently resonating throughout this work.

However, the overwhelming element in this inquiry was the emergence of theory from the data, from the empirical evidence of experience. This is the hallmark of an inductive process.

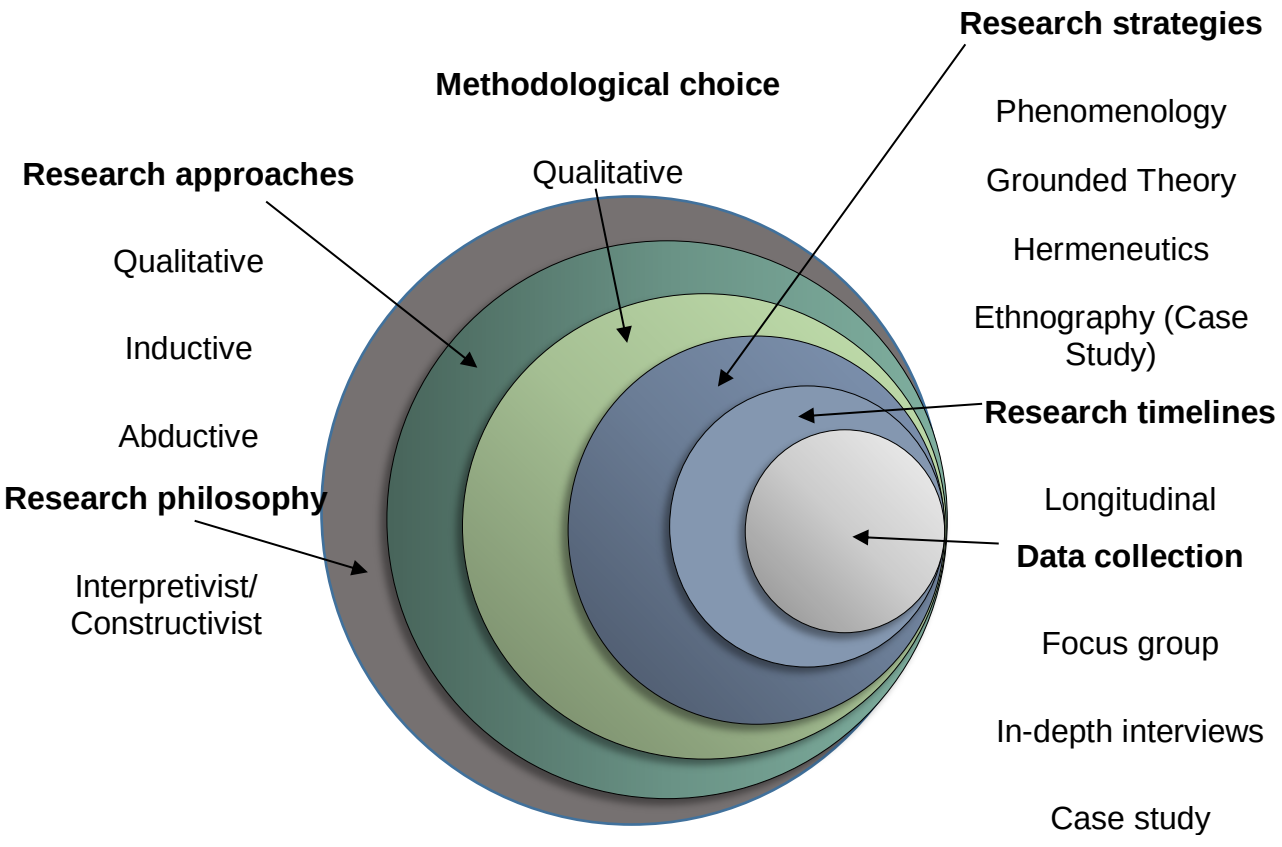
The data collection methods featured an active longitudinal two-year quasi-consultancy with an SME under the auspices of the Department of Trade and Industry's 'Knowledge Transfer' scheme, several in-depth interviews as well as a series of focus groups with a range of influential key players representative of significant marketing constituencies. The emphasis was on seeking contextual narratives to be analysed and integrated with secondary research from extant literature. The selection of participants was guided by established theoretical 'roles' or orientations such as 'naïve practitioner', 'pracademic', 'non-marketing practitioner' etc. (Wilkinson and Gray, 2007:50).

The researcher must "take cognisance of an 'insider' perspective" (Grant *et al,* 2001:67). Therefore, since the objective is to understand human action and interaction (Bryman and Bell,

2011), the following choice of research methodology is adopted as illustrated in *Figure 3.5* below and in the bullet points below:

- Research philosophy: interpretivist, subjectivist, constructivist
- Research approach: qualitative inductive (abductive)
- Methodological: qualitative multi-method
- Research strategies: grounded theory, phenomenology, hermeneutics
- Research timelines: longitudinal, cross-sectional
- Data collection methods: focus groups, in-depth interviews, questionnaires

Figure 3.5 Choice of research methodology



Source: Based on Saunders (2002)

Although there are some overlaps between different qualitative approaches – phenomenological research, ethnography, symbolic interactionism and hermeneutics – the common thread is explanation rather than description and starting from the premise that hypotheses and preconceptions are not part of the criterion (Husserl, 1970).

As has been stated above, the very nature of interpretive, qualitative research means that it should not be seen as necessarily providing 'meaning' of texts or contexts, but as being a basis for providing 'thick description', borne out of the shared reference between participant and interviewer. This makes it easier to link practice to theory by locating the concrete discourse of experience within a theoretical academic context, and vice versa. Corbin and Strauss (2014:35) suggest that qualitative research "is not meant to have a lot of structure or rigid approach to analysis…. [as] it is an interpretive, very dynamic, free-flowing' process". It is, according to Schurink (2004:2), a "particular inductive approach" based on subjective experiences, where there is a reciprocal relationship between data collection, analysis and emerging theory in the form of themes and patterns which emerges from the data.

3.10.1 **The argument in support of a non-linear methodological approach**

The received wisdom, indeed the generally unquestioned orthodoxy, in conducting and presenting academic research in journals, conferences and, of course, in theses, is a 'top-down' linear structure and direction. Often, research is conducted with a systematic peeling away of layers of a metaphorical 'research onion' (Saunders *et al*, 2007:102), carefully considering philosophical stance, research strategy, how data is analysed and the logic of interpretation. Some advocate a more flexible approach (Tapp and Hughes 2008). An 'organic' alternative to this 'outside-in' approach is an iterative, integrated methodology where data are discovered and discussed in process. As Blaxter *et al*, (1999: 15) point out, the work of researchers is "anything but linear". This mitigates towards a methodology which allows for a non-linear research framework grounded in the data and iterative in analysis and interpretation. Empirical research will be seen alongside the review of literature; themes from the analysis of texts will be used to link to empirical findings in a synthesis of iterative interaction. This juxtaposition of text and context is entirely consistent with grounded theory. Similarly, the author has taken inspiration from Ricouer's fusion of two strands of interpretive research: hermeneutics and phenomenology, between the rigour of the text and the requirements of the phenomenon. There is a "hermeneutic component of the phenomenological attempt to go beyond the surface of

things to their deeper meaning, just as there is a phenomenological component of the hermeneutical attempt to establish a critical distance toward the world to which we belong" (Ricouer,1984:2).

This iterative, back and forth double movement between text and phenomenon, grounded in lived-in experiential evidence, is the *leit motiv* implicit in this inquiry: integration of extant textual theory with contextual empirical evidence.

3.10.2 **Justification for phenomenological research element**

Research which tries to capture phenomena through the eyes of the actors who experience a situation in context is, appropriately, referred to as *phenomenological*. Confusingly, phenomenology is both a philosophy and a method of inquiry. It was also a philosophical movement founded by Husserl. Its focus is on conscious 'lived experience' and reality cannot exist outside of the experience of humans where meaning is constituted through meaningful action which is based on contextual values and motivations. The essence of this inquiry being the examination of phenomena makes it a phenomenological inquiry. Phenomenology emerged out of a "developing discontent with a philosophy of science based on an account of measurable things "and posits that "the conscious act or experience is inseparable from the meaning attached to it" (Ardley, 2008: 374). Here, *meaning* is central of phenomenological understanding and perception is regarded as the primary source of knowledge (Moustakas, 1994). Husserl (1936) positioned positivistic approaches were not suitable as the social world could only be described using phenomenological methods.

Van Manen (1999:39) captures the joy of embarking on such a project: "Phenomenological inquiry is not unlike an artistic endeavour, a creative attempt to somehow capture a certain phenomenon of life in a linguistic description that is both analytical, evocative and precise, unique and universal, powerful and sensitive". Phenomenological methods are particularly effective at bringing to the fore the essence of experience and perceptions of individuals from their own perspectives, and therefore at challenging implicit structural or normative assumptions of experience. Adding an interpretive dimension to phenomenological research, enabling it to be used as the basis for practical theory, allows it to inform, support or challenge assumptions. As Husserl *op.cit* suggests, a phenomenological approach allows the researcher the freedom to think creatively with interpretation being a cumulation of personal knowledge and received wisdom, the researcher being conscious of this whilst executing the research

method. The focus here is on the relationship between objects of experience and subjective structures which give those objects, systems or institutions subjective meaning. Weber explored the subjective meaning in social action; similarly, Schutz's *phenomenological sociology* is basically a synthesis of these fundamentally interpretive approaches: transcendental phenomenology and action theory. Phenomenological research utilises the use of live-in ethnographies which depict and describe individual and collective experience within a social context.

This methodology is relevant for extracting rich explanation of individual situations and advocates the examination of a narrow number of samples from a breadth of contexts (rather than a larger sample size to justify quantitative statistical reliability) is valid. This inquiry is entirely consistent with this.

Merleay-Ponty (1965) identifies four qualities expressed in the various iterations of phenomenology which are relevant to this specific inquiry:

- *description* (of phenomena);
- *reduction* (suspending or 'bracketing' the phenomena);
- *essences* (the core meaning of the experience of an individual); and,
- *intentionality* (referring to consciousness of action).

Van Manen (1999:39) suggests that a phenomenological explanation "constitutes the essence of something that is construed so that the structure can be revealed to us in such a fashion that we are now able to grasp the nature and significance of this experience in a hitherto unseen way".

Applying a critical phenomenological perspective (Berger and Luckmann *op.cit.*) is not a common methodology (Goulding, 2004), particularly in an inquiry about marketing management theory and practice. However, having a phenomenological perspective, as Kent (1986) suggests, is appropriate where people – in this case marketing constituents – construct individual interpretations of the creation and application of marketing knowledge: through experience rather than any technocratic framework. Here, Minger's *critical* approach is particularly useful. He identifies four features which represent a critical approach:

- A critique of rhetoric questions the actor's position and motives.
- A critique of tradition questions the traditions of the customs and practices.
- A critique of authority questions the hegemony of a single viewpoint over the plurality of perspectives.
- A critique of objectivity questions the notion of knowledge being value free.

This is the essence of phenomenology: individual critical reflection about how things appear to be to our conscious awareness and ultimately how the world appears to us in and through individual and cumulative group experience focused on specific incidents or events.

In the case of this inquiry, questions in the interviews and focus groups which tried to glean perceptions of 'what marketing means', 'first exposure to marketing from a theoretical and practical perspective', 'contribution to the field of marketing knowledge', 'key ingredients of a definition of marketing', 'relating to personal values', and, indeed 'what the purpose of marketing is' provided individual and collective interpretations of the phenomena being investigated.

This is very much what Willis (*op.cit.* p.107) suggests in that the focus should be "on understanding from the perspective of the person or persons being studied".

The basis for a "reflective structural analysis" (Ardley *ibid*) is an understanding of the experience of research participants, often ariculated through narratives which make the research richer in meaning and insight (Shankar and Goulding, 2001). The interviews outlined below in *Section 3* – which feature some key executive managers and academy elite - were phenomonologcal in nature as they were individually respresentative of their institutions or professions and able to reflect on the *Lebenswalt*. This 'lifeworld' dynamic is a collective, lived (*erlebt*) experience individually expressed and, for Husserl, is a key tenet of all epistemological inquiries. Giorgi (1977) describes phenomenological research methods as consisting of: phenomenological reduction, description and a search for 'essences'.

3.10.3 **Justification for grounded theory research element**

Because of its appropriateness to examining experience, meaning and social interaction, an increasingly important approach in qualitative research is grounded theory. According to Martin and Turner (1986: 141), grounded theory is "an inductive discovery methodology that allows the researcher to develop a theoretical account of the general features of a topic while simultaneously *grounding* the account in empirical observations or data, providing the researcher the flexibility for inquiry, allowing meaning to emerge out of the data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) introduced the idea of grounded theory - rooted in symbolic interactionism - as a means of constructing theory which is grounded in empirical data, not present prior to the research process but collected during it; ergo the theory is *grounded*. This is underlined in Johnson and Christenson's (2000:78) comment that "empirical statements can be made during grounded theory research as knowledge is founded in the data".

Whilst Glaser and Strauss (1967) argued that theory emerges from the data, Charmaz (*ibid* p.10) qualified this arguing that neither "theories nor data are discovered they are part of the same world as ourselves and we contrast our grounded theories through our past and present involvement and interactions with people, perspectives and research practices". Charmaz (*ibid* p.9) viewed grounded theory as "a set of principles and practices which can complement other approaches to qualitative data analysis…[and] serves as a way to learn about the worlds which are studied and as a method for developing theories to understand". Addison (1989:41) lists the following characteristics of grounded interpretive research:

- Grounded theory researchers continually *question gaps in the data* - omissions and inconsistencies, and incomplete understandings. They continually recognise the need for obtaining information on what influences and directs the situations and people being studied.

- Grounded theory researchers stress open *processes* in conducting of research rather than fixed methods and procedures.

- Grounded theorists recognise the importance of *context* and social structure.

- Grounded theory researchers generate theory and data *from interviewing processes* rather than from observing individual practices.

- In grounded theory research, data collecting, coding and analysis *occur simultaneously* and in relation to each other rather than as separate components of a research design.

Grounded theory is an inductive process: theory must grow out of the data and be grounded in that data. According to Legewie and Schervier-Legewie (2004), Grounded Theory isn't a theory at all but a methodology to discover theories which might emerge from the dormant data. Kelle (2005:24) refers to an "inductivist self-misunderstanding". It was originally conceived to produce knowledge which explains social processes in context (the roots and uses of marketing knowledge in the case of this inquiry) by using the unique *method* of merging category identification and integration with the end-product of the process being the development of theory.

Theoretical sensitivity (when the researcher transcends the descriptive level to be reflexively, analytically engaged), is when grounded research comes into its own. Using a phenomenologically methodological approach produces explanation rather than description; this is a central focus of this inquiry.

Grounded theory is effectively a combination of pragmatism and interactionism, a naturalistic methodology which includes "the phenomenon of men [and women] participating in the construction of the structures which shape their lives" (Strauss, 1993:19). Howell (*op. cit.* p.152) posited that "grounded theory involves phenomenological interpretivist positions with pragmatist underpinning". It looks at a particular situation and tries to understand what is going on as part of an inductive process (Kervin *et al*, 2006). The use of grounded research does not require to conceive a hypothesis to be proven, and, as Bryant (2002) suggests, this allows the researcher more freedom in exploring the topic and lets issues emerge.

Adopting a grounded research approach is consistent with a constructivist epistemology and ontology as priority is "placed with the phenomena of study and seeing both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants" (Charmaz, *ibid* p.330). Used widely for socially-oriented research, it has the advantage of not being manacled by the presence of *a priori* knowledge, allowing 'emergence' from the data and having the capacity to interpret complex phenomena (Charmaz, 2003). She advocates that researchers should "focus on the meaning" (Charmaz, 2000:510). Initially, Charmaz *ibid* argues for an openness to all theoretical understandings, developing tentative interpretations about these data and

through codes and nascent categories. As it is a 'constant-comparative' method of data collection and analysis, grounded methods enhance this flexibility by allowing data to be shaped and re-shaped.

Reciprocity between researcher and participants is a fundamental feature of grounded theory. Burden and Roodt (2007:11) state that "grounded theory requires the recognition that inquiry is always context-bound, and facts should be viewed as theory-laden and value-laden". Furthermore, the relationship between how the data is collected and how they are analysed are interrelated; there is a repetitive nature to analysis informing further data collection. Analysis is conducted by a process of 'constant comparisons' where data is examined for similarity and difference, grouped together in themes or categories of comparable data. Charmaz *op. cit.* places emphasis on *action* in the initial stages of grounded research, suggesting that she always starts with the 'gerund' - the action words articulating practice or expressed through the text. It is systematic approach which involves going back to the data and developing ideas which have emerged; it is comparative, interactive and iterative. The construction and explanations are *grounded* in the routines and dynamics of the empirical experience of actors acting and interacting in a social context.

3.10.3.1 Induction and abduction in grounded theory

Abduction is the logic used to construct descriptions and explanations that are grounded in the everyday activities of, as well as in the language and meanings used by, social actors. It is a "means-of-inferencing" (Reichertz, 2010). According to Martin and Turner (1986:141), grounded theory is "an inductive discovery methodology that allows the researcher to develop a theoretical account of the general features of a topic while simultaneously grounding the account in empirical observations or data". This type of reasoning is referred to as 'ampliative' as findings rely on inference and are augmented by creative supposition which seeks 'best explanation' of data. This act of drawing inference from data, both scientific and generating new knowledge through profound insight is more than inductive; it is *abductive.*

Theoretical insights, according to Richardson and Kramer, (2006:497), "are inevitable cornerstones of the development of grounded theory and abduction is worked out as a type of inference that characterises this development". Abduction is applied, according to Watson (2005:177), when "attempting to move from lay accounts of everyday life to technical,

scientific or expert descriptions of that social life". In other words, the researcher interpreting other people's interpretations, applying logic and method to discovery.

This is directly applicable to this inquiry: the researcher applying expertise and experience in interpreting interpretation. The author's contribution to knowledge is characteristic of this in that it goes beyond inference to innovative: insight from expertise and experience facilitating new knowledge.

Generally speaking, abduction or 'retroduction', can be a type of hybrid between deduction and induction whereby inferences are made from observed facts. It accounts for behaviour rather than trying to predict it and therefore involves functional rather than causal explanations. It is abductive – retroduction or inference - because it mixes *de*ductive and *in*ductive and develops from an observation to a theory which, in turn, accounts for the theory. The generation of new theory necessitates taking a different, creative view to well-established perspectives. Whereas *induction* uses new data to reinforce existing theory, and *deduction* suggests hypotheses already based on theory in use, neither are particularly creative (Pierce, 1903).

Data is drawn from participants' accounts of their environment, context and experience containing the concepts and meanings used to structure and interpret their world and any interpretation by the researcher must be done from an 'insider's' perspective as authentically as possible. Here, in this inquiry, abduction is used as an inferential process, where data does not completely fit into the parameters of extant theory.

There is ambiguity over whether it is itended to be inductive or abductive – not relyng on existing knowledge but creating new categories of knowledge – but Strauss and Corbin (1990:27) come close to a definitive perspective: "Creativity is a vital component of the grounded theory method. Its procedures force the researcher to break through assumptions and to create new order out of the old. Creativity manifests itself in the ability of the researcher to aptly name categories; and also to let the mind wander and make free associations that are necessary for generating stimulating questions and for coming up with a comparison that leads to discovery". Therefore, there are two positions: *similarity* of known codes (qualitative inductive) and the creation of something new other than existing codes or theory (abductive reasoning), both present in grounded theory.

Whether inductive or abductive, 'coherent perception' (Reichertz, 2010) is the most compelling reason for using a grounded theory methodology to underpin this inquiry.

3.10.3.2 Justification for using literature in the proposed grounded research element

Due to ambiguities in the initial premises of grounded theory, there have been various strands emanating from the original source: Glaserian 'classical' version; Strauss and Corbin's 'structured' approach; and Charmaz's (2006) iteration rooted in constructionism. Those 'ambiguities were based on disagreements of:

- The *role of induction* which was developed as a rejection of hypotheses-testing, offering contextualised theory, emerging from the data, set against the 'deductive', prescriptive element of using a coding paradigm which looks for initial codes in the data; the "technical tail is beginning to wag the theoretical dog" as Melia (1996:376) puts it.

- The *discovery or construction of theory* which underplays researcher creative input in developing theory through researcher perception and interpretation rather than theory being revealed. This is very much Charmaz's (1990:1169) social constructionist view, that the 'discovery' process is really "discovering the ideas the researcher has about the data after interacting with it".

- The *debate over analysis of social or individual experience* shows the development of a macro view of a phenomenon to the focus on individual experience and interpretation (ie: the internal world of the participant). Again, it is Charmaz (1995:30) who advocated this 'inside out' approach to investigation.

Critics of this view refer to it as 'Grounded Theory Lite'; rather than lighter GT, the author prefers 'later GT' (form the 1980s post-Strauss). Whilst the author subscribes to Charmaz's *ibid* view, the belief that both an inside (emic) and outside view can be maintained is upheld in the methodology adopted.

As discussed in *Section 1.7* above, theoretical sensitivity is the ability to generate theory from data in comparison to normative theory models. The question of how to achieve this arises. With grounded theory, the tension of how to investigate knowledge without any prior knowledge of the subject matter and how to "enter the research setting with as few predetermined ideas as possible" (Glaser, 1978:2), remains a sticking point. Advocates of a

purer form of grounded research argue for the initial absence of any points of reference to extant literature. Indeed, Glaser and Strauss (1967: 37) were explicitly against this: "An effective strategy is, at first, literally to ignore the literature of theory and focus on the area under study". Holton (2007:269) another who was adamant that "grounded theory requires the researcher to enter the research field with no preconceived problem statement, interview protocols or extensive literature review".

The question is whether knowledge of subject and dynamic 'contaminates' subsequent data (if theory is not 'discovered' from new data). To some, a *deferred literature review* is recommended "to avoid unduly influencing the pre-conceptualisation of the research through extensive reading in the substantive area and the forcing of extant theoretical overlays on the collection of data and analysis" (Glaser and Holton, 2004:46). Some argue that prior knowledge of the phenomenon being investigated contaminates the data because the interviewer is bringing bias.

However, the traditional stance on where in the thesis review of literature should appear, has moved away from the positivist view that original data should be viewed without pre-conceptions of theory, values or knowledge (Kennedy and Lingard, 2006). In their discussion on the basics of qualitative research, Strauss and Corbin (1990:73) threw doubt on the original premise that in grounded research the review of literature should be delayed until original data emerges from research: "Every type of inquiry rests on the asking of effective questions". Furthermore, the emergence of new theory is necessarily guided by existing theory. There is growing evidence, as Giles *et al* (2013:39) suggest, that "the use of the literature review or any pre-knowledge should not prevent a grounded theory approach if reflexivity is used to prevent prior knowledge distorting the researcher's perception of the data and the entire process is transparent".

This reflexivity can enhance theoretical sensitivity and rigour which helps the researcher to achieve better insights and is characteristic of the methodology used in this inquiry.

Even now, researchers will line up on either side of the Glaserian traditional view of grounded research or the Straussian adapted version. They acknowledge that the life experience and knowledge of extant relevant literature, particularly for experienced researchers, could not be dismissed as not pre-existing. Indeed, they further suggest that such knowledge can enhance theoretical sensitivity, creativity and conceptualisation. Corbin and Strauss (2008:46) underline

this claiming that if researchers "do not immerse themselves in the data or use their professional knowledge, the ability to recognise and give meaning is not there". It is unrealistic, and some would say undesirable, for researchers to have no prior knowledge of the subject matter to be investigated. Knowingly or not, scholarship intended to generate new insight is built on extant knowledge, informed by research paradigms (McGregor and Murnane, *op. cit.* p.419).

Charmaz *ibid* argues that there cannot be a *tabula rasa*; Eisenhart (2002:12) agrees: "it is impossible to achieve this idea of a clean theoretical slate". From a constructivist's perspective, Charmaz (*ibid* p.166) advocates a preliminary literature review to enable participation in the theoretical conversation and claims that during data collection and analysis "completing a through, sharply focused literature review strengthens your argument and your credibility".

Charmaz's advice is followed in this thesis where a preliminary review of philosophical, conceptual and subject specific literature in *Chapters 2 and 3* is followed by an augmented integration of published theory and experiential evidence in *Chapters 6, 7 and 8*.

Therefore, the stance taken in this inquiry is that a deferred literature review is unrealistic and undesirable since the work is based on investigating areas and constituencies of knowledge that are built on very rich experience of these domains. Apperception, assimilating new ideas to one's own existing knowledge, is surely the hallmark of good research which the researcher brings to the 'new' research process.

If nothing else, this begs the question about grounded researchers therefore being able to research in the same area again for future projects. Furthermore, the PhD process demands, at least in the proposal stage, an assessment of indicative literature which informs the projected work and will constitute a reasonable amount of the substance of secondary research. Prior knowledge of the field is surely a prerequisite for understanding the subject parameters and dynamics, contextualising the inquiry, providing the researcher with subject orientation and offer "clarity in thinking about concepts and possible theory development" (Henwood and Pidgeon, 2006:350). Coffey and Atkinson (1996:157) express the need for literature review well: "It is after all not very clever to rediscover the wheel".

Strübing's (2007:587) argument is very convincing, arguing that it is "not whether previous knowledge should be used in actual data analysis; the important insight lies rather in how to make proper use of the previous knowledge". A comprehensive literature review does not just

act as a bibliography but also a topographic perspective of the subject dynamic and body, what McMenamin (2006:134) refers to as "the geography of the subject". Suddaby (2006:635) clinches the argument here and offers a solid reason for selecting a grounded theory methodology: "Grounded Theory was originally introduced as an attempt to achieve a practical middle ground between a theory-laden view of the world and an unfettered empiricism". Lempert (2007:261) supports the view that there should be continual engagement with the research process as "knowledge of the substantive area in sufficient depth [will help] to understand the parameters of the discourse [sufficient enough] to enter into the current theoretical conversation".

Furthermore, the question of whether subsequent data collected will be analysed with an *a priori* frame of reference exacerbates this. However, as Dunne (*op. cit.* p.114) argues, in grounded research data collection and analysis doesn't occur in a linear sequence concurrently, these types of data being "deliberately privileged above extant theoretical concepts". The imposition of prior interpretation, or the existence of theoretical frameworks, could undermine the authenticity of the new data. However, as Heath (2006:519) points out, this is a principle associated with most qualitative research approaches. It is this need to "learn not to know" original thought on data which is the key to this rigidity. Despite a general "uneasiness by many to postpone the literature review till later in the research" (Weiner, 2007:299) until the more substantive part of the analysis takes place, the increasing application of grounded research meant that there has been some 'softening' of this rigid stance, Strauss in particular. As Urquhart (2007:351) suggests, "the injunction that no literature that relates to the phenomena should be studied before coding the data is one of the most widespread reasons for the lack of use of grounded theory".

Indeed, Strauss' partnership with Juliet Corbin eventually saw him becoming an advocate of an early review of extant research. Consequently, grounded theorists have adopted a more respectful although still critical stance to the use of existing theories. The likes of Stern (2007) positively argues that "a literature review which ensues from the emergent grounded theory is essential not only for academic honesty but in order to demonstrate how the study builds on and contributes to knowledge in the field". Taking an abductive approach to using literature (to enhance the narrative of a phenomenon) will help make theorising more visible and flexible through modifying or synthesising existing concepts (eg: tacit knowledge). For Coffey and Atkinson (*op. cit.* p.155), "abductive reasoning lies at the heart of grounded theorising",

claiming that ideas are not just 'in' the data but in doing the "intellectual, imaginative work of ideas in parallel to the other tasks of data management".

This inquiry is about perception and *ap*perception: interpreting individual interpretation whilst adding to one's own knowledge. As a consequence, the presence of extant theory before and during data capture and analysis has been adopted.

3.10.3.3 Reflexivity in grounded research

The point at which researcher 'positionality' is immersed in this 'theoretical conversation' describes *reflexivity* in research, defined by Robson (2002:22) as "an awareness of the ways in which the researcher as an individual with a particular social identity and background has an impact on the research process". For data to be properly understood, and the context to be fully interpreted, the researcher must be the main data gathering instrument. Reflexivity is crucial in research (particularly qualitative research) where the researcher is agent to, and influenced by, both the gathering and interpretation of data. "There is no reason why a researcher cannot be self-aware and be able to appreciate other theories without imposing them on the data" (Urquhart, *op. cit*. p.351). Some key reflective research ingredients (such as 'memoing') are already present in grounded research. McCannn and Clark (2003:15) echo Lempert's *ibid* reference to researcher engagement in "theoretical conversation" claiming that memos "reflect the researcher's internal dialogue with the data at a point in time". Suddaby (*op. cit.* p.635) describes this type of this reflexivity as being "continuously aware of the possibility that you are being influenced by pre-existing conceptualisations of your subject". In grounded research, reflexivity is also implicit in the process of constant comparison of data where the researcher is compelled to consider how extant knowledge and data produced from empirical research can be integrated into emerging theory.

This is the defining point for this inquiry: the basis of research has to be how best the data are gathered and analysed; significant analysis can be the fruits of gathering rich data.

Rich data - 'thick description' as Geertz (1973) originally termed it in his seminal work *Interpretation of Cultures* – can help develop strong grounded theories anchored in participants' perceptions, actions and interactions. As Orlikoski and Baroudi (1991:5) state: "People create and associate their own subjective and intersubjective meanings as they interact with the world around them" and interpretive research "attempts to understand phenomena

through accessing the meanings participants assign to them". Grounded theory is the most appropriate methodology for this inquiry because the premise is that data – textual and contextual – are extracted before making conclusions about theory. As (Geertz 1973:28) pointed out: "What we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to". These constructions can be recorded in field notes, participant testimonies (written and oral), researcher observation, interviews, textual presentation and longitudinal case analysis. Grounded research provides the methods to answer the 'why' questions from an interpretive perspective.

Using a framework suggested by Burden and Roodt, (*op. cit.* p.14) to describe how qualitative research can be *grounded* in empirical evidence, *Figure 3.6* below (*Section 3.11*, p. 162) illustrates the author's approach to where data has been collected and how it is to be synthesised into a new working 'knowledge' model. Payne (2007:68) refers to this as "the dynamic interplay". The two strands of 'contextual' and 'textual' data source reflect the broad church of marketing constituents – see full list and explanation below – as well as the roots of that knowledge: from theory or from practice. As with all good research, this is a cyclical, iterative research design demonstrating how the author's own research contribution both informs and is the product of this process. Grounded theory ethnographers "give priority to the studied phenomenon or process rather than to a description of a setting... and makes a priority to the studied *conceptual* rendering of actions" (Charmaz, 2005:15).

In the course of investigating the roots and uses of marketing knowledge, the author captured the experiential evidence and textual testimonies of some of the most influential constituents both inside and outside the construction of marketing knowledge. *Section 3.9* below describes the type and range of representatives from many of the key agencies and actors used during the inquiry. The empirical evidence records how marketing knowledge is created and used in principle, practice and theory inside the domains of: the theatre of theory of the Academy of Marketing Conference; several Chartered Institute of Marketing curriculum development workshops; years of Chartered Institute of Marketing programme development and delivery; a two-year longitudinal study/consultancy of an SME; observation of pedagogical marketing development at two UK HE Institutions. In addition, the recorded testimonies of the Marketing Managers of IBM, the CIM and two Premier League Football Clubs, the Heads of both the Academy of Marketing Conference and the Chartered Institute of Marketing, various marketing and retail consultants, Managing Directors of SMEs and Marketing Research

consultancies, as well as the authoritative voices of four key marketing authors. The footprint of marketing knowledge that this rich *grounded* practical and theoretical data records evidences the different perspectives present in discourse. The essence of this grounded approach is anchored in the contingent *situation* of the research participants. Clarke (2005) attempts to connect grounded theory methodology with discourse analysis, suggesting a "reflexive" or "discursive turn" which amounts to a sort of narrative mapping of participant's situational experience.

3.10.4 **Justification for hermeneutical research element**

The emphasis in qualitative research, according to Kinsella (2006:3), "is on understanding and interpretation as opposed to verification". For this reason, hermeneutic methodology is often used in qualitative research because, as Freeman and Chung (2014:34) state "it looks to interpretive inquiry". Put simply, hermeneutics *is* interpretation. As Forster suggests, this is because "it concerns the nature of interpretation itself and as it is, becomes the scope and significance of interpretation". The purpose of hermeneutics is the exploration of experience: the life-world of people. It is this idiographic, contingent analysis which distinguishes qualitative research from nomothetic generalisable research methods. Hermeneutics has "much to offer those interested in qualitative inquiry and is especially suitable for work of a textual and interpretive nature" (Kinsella *ibid*). However, when individuals interpret, real essence can't really be known but meaning can and this is socially constructed, constantly being created in interaction (Bowens, 1997). It is "the art of understanding and of making oneself understood" Zimmerman (*op. cit.*p.2) and therefore is an appropriate methodology for this inquiry.

Using a hermeneutical approach as a methodology is appropriate since the logic of beginning with a holistic view of a phenomenon, examining the particular, and then returning to the whole again (Weinsheimer, 1985:22) is an approach prominent in this inquiry.

This suggests that the knowledge domains for this thesis - action in context and textual representations and the analytical readings thereof – and the grounding of knowledge – practical understanding – finds sympathy with a hermeneutic perspective. Furthermore, in terms of the method adopted (the relationship to that being researched), familiarity with practices and participation in the participant's shared culture, is exactly what the inquiry entails. The last criteria – justification of the explanation – refers to interpretation as being an

appropriate method by which this inquiry can be conducted. Using these criteria, a hermeneutic approach is entirely appropriate.

How we understand the nature of things is dependent on personal involvement, and according to Zimmerman (*ibid* p.2) hermeneutics "is the art of understanding and of making oneself understood". We do not construct the world, but the world discloses itself to us. It describes how individual interpretation, *meso* perception if you will, is based on not just contemporary temporality but also our past, and even in the personal and professional roles which individuals inhabit. Hermeneutic researchers reject the notion that objective knowledge is neutral and disinterested: they believe that it is dependent upon personal commitment, creative imagination and passion. Zimmerman *ibid* claims that hermeneutics is a kind of critical realism not relativism; objectivity is not destroyed by the interpretive nature of knowledge.

Contemporary literary hermeneutics is premised on the notion of the text 're-making itself'. The linguistic tradition in hermeneutics can provide an additional interpretive method to an inquiry seeking to understand the interpretation and representation of *meaning* in marketing. Indeed, that is exactly what hermeneutics is: the interpretation of intent (eg: of an author) within an historical and cultural context. Theory published in text books and academic journals; marketing plans written as statements of strategy and intents; consumer behaviour implicit and explicit in marketing communications campaigns; these are all textual artefacts of marketing business culture. Horizon of expectations (or fusion of horizons) suggests a moving landscape or context within which the text is set. Understanding is really an integration of what is unfamiliar, into the individual's familiar context: other people's knowledge is fused and, consequently, our knowledge is extended, and our mind is broadened.

Hermeneutic theory tells us that 'horizon of expectations' is contingent on the context within which interpretations take place. Part of this inquiry is the interpretation of marketing knowledge expressed in academic journals, text books and all other written forms. The exegitical interrogation of a text, for example, leads to a fusion of horizons in which the 'reality' of the text becomes the same as that of the reader's and the text only has meaning when in relation to a horizon (Gadamer, 1975). This is a hermeneutical experience where "one intends to understand the text itself … but the interpreter's own thoughts too have gone into re-awakening the text's meaning" (Gadamer, 1996:388). In other words, the researcher's own 'horizon' is decisive in interpretation. The very words and concepts which are used are in fact

a medium for our thoughts. This is evident in marketing manuscripts, often original thought regurgitated as new insights. This will involve a reading (Dillon, 2005:254) of the literature to separate the different layers of well-rehearsed review.

The point made elsewhere in this work that "Marketing manuscripts are often palimpsests bearing the faint hallmark of existing insight and well-established praxis" is apposite here since reading and re-reading of a text often reveals a re-writing of previous established works.

In this iteration of hermeneutical analysis, the 'horizon' of the text is both framed by the dialogue that passes within the re-readings of texts which Gadamer *ibid* refers to as "in part the transmission of tradition". A precursor to this approach is evident in Gadamer's (1994:267) view that the meaning of a text comes to mean different things at different moments in history: "Our historical consciousness is always filed with a variety of voices in which the echo of the past is heard… we have, as it were, a new experience of history whenever a new voice is heard in which the past echoes". Iser (1974) gives a pertinent suggestion that not only that a text's meaning becomes co-constructed by author and reader – author's intent and reader's reception - but a given text may itself *imply* a reader. Post and Erikson (1999:983) claim that with hermeneutical text aims at "establishing an understanding of the meaning of the actual text and is characterised by its focus on the receiver".

3.10.5 **Bringing the main research approaches together**

Because it's contextual, individual, qualitative and therefore subjective, the philosophical foundations of this research will feature:

- Subjectivist ontology
- Interpretivist epistemology
- Emancipatory axiology
- Inductive and abductive grounded theory method

The nature of the methodology chosen, and indeed the analysis required, is within the interpretive paradigm. In turn, the approach is both inductive and abductive. Realities are *local* and *specific* in the sense that they vary between groups of individuals (Guba and Lincoln,

1994:110). Constructions, being ontological elements of realities, are not absolutely true or correct in any sense, only more or less informed and sophisticated (Schwandt, 1994:129). In other words, reality is *socially constructed* (i.e. not merely discovered) in that the constructions are not personal or technical (Dahlbom, 1992:101). Hence, there is a blurred distinction between ontology and epistemology, as what constitutes reality depending upon a particular actor and his values (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:111).

Although perception and thinking necessarily is individual, the construction process involves other social and cultural artefacts and therefore inevitably becomes social. Gradual extraction of data, where theory emerges and is inferred, is an inductive approach; induction with contextual judgement is abduction. And, as Glaser and Strauss (1967:239) famously claimed: "Clearly, a grounded theory that is faithful to the everyday realities of the substantive area is one that has been carefully induced in the data". Indeed, grounded theory is known as "an inductive or ground-up approach to data analysis" (Marvasti, 2004:84). And yet the dichotomy over prior theoretical knowledge, as Kelle (2005:24) suggests, has caused grounded theory to suffer from "an inductivist self-misunderstanding".

Table 3.5 Comparison of Qualitative Analysis Approaches illustrates the possiblities in choosing qualitative analysis approaches, analytic strategies and questions regarding the core meanings evident in the text, relevant to evaluation or research objectives, looking for the most relevant themes or categories and what the best form of presentation is are considered.

Table 3.5 Comparison of Qualitative Analysis Approaches

	General Inductive Approach	**Grounded Theory**	**Discourse Analysis**	**Phenomenology**	**Hermeneutics**
Analytic strategies and questions	What are the core meanings evident in the text, relevant to evaluation or research objectives?	To generate or discover theory using open and axial coding and theoretical sampling.	Concerned with talk and texts as social practices and their rhetorical or argumentative organisation.	Seeks to uncover the meaning that lives within experience and to convey felt understanding in words.	Action in text and analogues.

Outcome of analysis	Themes or categories most relevant to research objectives identified.	A theory that includes themes or categories.	Multiple meanings of language and text identified and described.	A description of lived experiences.	Starting place provided by practical understanding, articulated and corrected.
Presentation of findings	Description of most important themes.	Description of theory that includes core themes.	Descriptive account of multiple meanings in text.	A coherent story or narrative about the experience.	Narrative accounts; a reading of text.

Source: Developed from Packer and Addison (1989); Thomas (2008)

3.11 Outline data capture approach

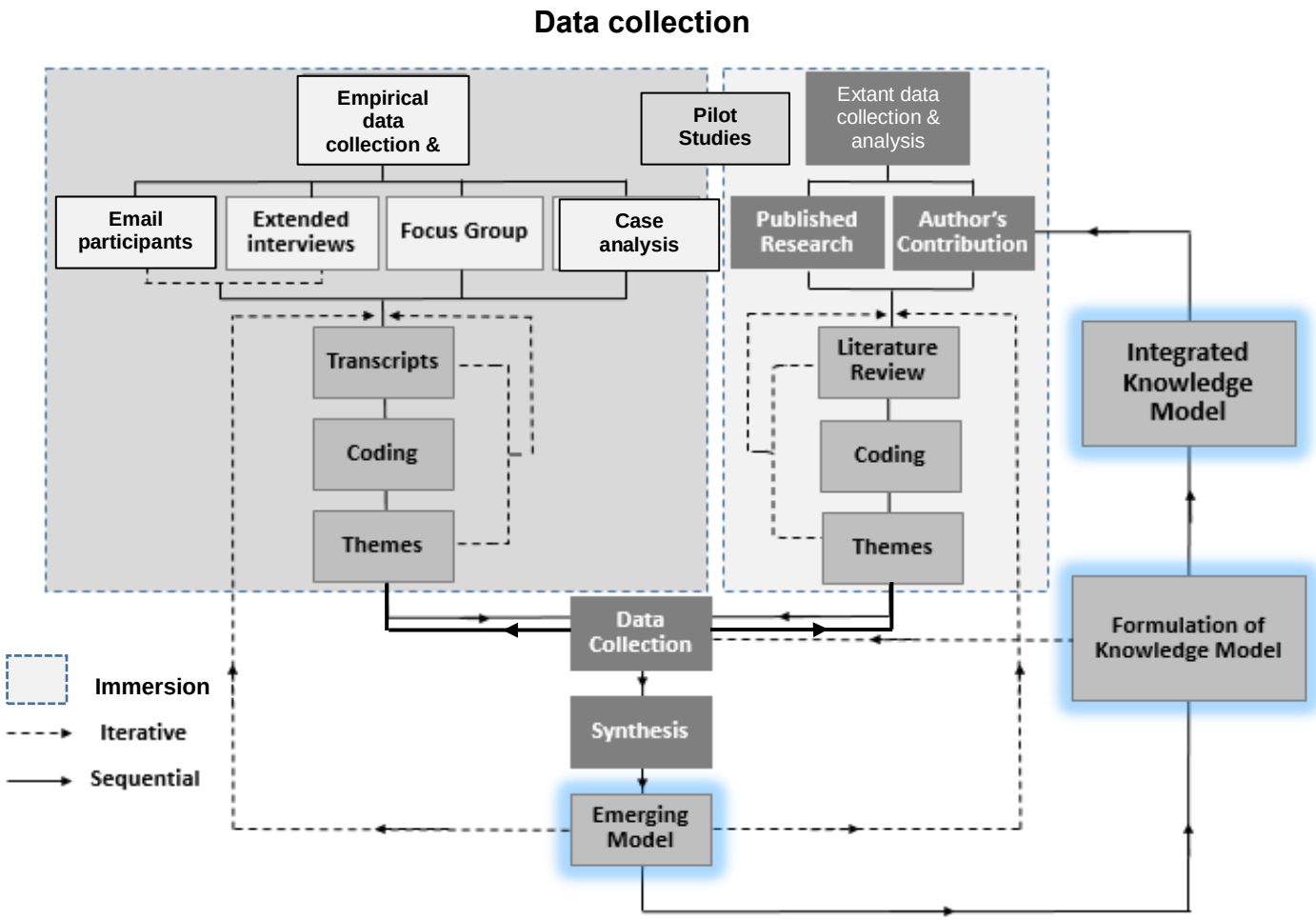
The common thread which runs through all the variations of interpretive methodology is the notion of social reality not being an exterior object but a subjective construct where socially constructed meaning is accepted. The reflexive nature of this subjectivity is one assumed to be shared by both the researcher and the research subjects and infers a critical view of what is interpreted as 'data'. Data are not seen as external facts remote from the researcher but constructed within a negotiated, interpreted process. For instance, data collected from a symbolic interactionist perspective is not considered to be of a passive nature but interactive, constructed inseparably: it is socially constructed, negotiated, symbolic meaning. For this reason, numeric, secondary data analyses as a means of extracting data have been generally spurned by interpretivist researchers.

It is important to state here the author's stance on the use of grounded theory in data collection and analysis. From a purist paradigmatic and methodological perspective, grounded theory (what Charmaz referred to as 'Objectivist GT' and Glaser calls 'Classic GT') can be too rigid and not feasible in all contexts. 'Informed' GT, as espoused by Charmaz, takes a constructivist

perspective and advocates the role of the researcher as an influential actor in data handling and supports the view that 'plausible accounts' rather than new theory is produced.

Figure 3.6 Research framework and marketing knowledge model synthesis below illustrates

Figure 3.6 Research framework and marketing knowledge model synthesis



Source: Author's own framework (Developed from Burden, 2006)

how the cyclical nature of knowledge generation through integration of primary data coding and secondary research literature review. The imposition of prior interpretation, or the existence of theoretical frameworks, could undermine the authenticity of the new data. This shows the iterative nature of qualitative research and, more specifically, how data has been collected and interpreted in this inquiry.

Figure 3.6 depicts: the immersion of the researcher/author in the data; the flow and dynamics of this data collection approach; the range and richness of that empirical data drawn from case analyses, extended interviews, focus groups; and the juxtaposition and integration of extant knowledge. Alongside the sequential movement of data analysis is the recycling of data interpretation. This act of reiterative reflection and interpretation is a product of the level of immersion and personal involvement the author has with the subject matter and context of this study.

3.11.1 **Choice and justification of data capture and analysis methods**

Data capture and analysis methods are selected based on research aims and the nature of the inquiry, in this case one of interpretation. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006:154), "qualitative data analysis is a search for general statements about relationships and underlying themes". This suggests structure, interpretation, subjectivity. The reflexive nature of this subjectivity is one assumed to be shared by both the researcher and the research subjects and infers a critical view of what is interpreted as 'data'.

Therefore, the most appropriate types of data for this inquiry is deemed to be qualitative data. Mason (1996:54) describes three alternative approaches for collecting these types of data:

- 'literal' (analysing language structure);
- 'interpretive' (attempting to interpret the 'meaning' participants' have of phenomenon) and,
- 'reflexive' (the researcher's experience of collecting the data).

The basis of data collection in this inquiry is interpretive and reflexive.

3.11.2 **Interviewing as the chosen data capture method**

The methods chosen for data capture in this inquiry – interviews, focus groups and questionnaires – are used most frequently in qualitative research. The purpose of the interview is, as Kvale (1983: 174) claims "to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena", enabling individuals to think and to talk about their predicaments, needs, expectations, experiences and understandings

(Nunkoonsing, 2005). Kvale (*op. cit.* p.1) asserts that qualitative interviews can have objectivity by "letting the investigated object speak" in the description of the phenomenon.

Any inquiry which aims to critically examine the dynamics of marketing practice and marketing theory and evaluate its relevance and applicability in a pedagogical context, must attempt to get inside the 'lifeworlds' of the various marketing constituents in their respective constituencies. To this end, the received wisdom in qualitative research is that interviews are the best method with which to "enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 2002:341). Whether in the form of focus group, face-to-face, longitudinal interrogation, or a long-distance email conversation, the use of interviews in this inquiry is seen as most appropriate because it is, as Kazmer and Xie (2008:258) suggest, "the most direct, research-focused interaction between research and participant".

Furthermore, it is, of course, important to consider the *context*(*s*) within which research takes place, as well as recognising both the researcher and participant in the process. Fontana and Frey (2000:663) suggests that interviews can be seen as "negotiated accomplishments of both interviewers and participants that are shaped by the *contexts* and situations in which they take place". More importantly, as Ryan *et al* (2009:310) cautions, "it is pertinent that the type of interview is congruent with the research question and aims and objectives of the study". Indeed, Schultze and Avital (2011:2) posit that the researcher should "take a more reflexive stance toward their craft by considering the contextual details of the interview setting and process".

Interviews allow the gathering of rich, complex data. Alvesson (2003:15) describes three perspectives on using the interview as a research method. The first two - *neo-positivism* (analysing facts) and *romanticism* (studying meaning) – regard interviewees as epistemologically passive providing answers to research questions. The third - *localism* – challenges the instrumental use of interviews but rather sees the process as chance to look for contextual individual meaning. This perspective supports the view that "social phenomena do not exist independently of people's understandings of them, and that those understandings play a crucial generative role" (Hammersley, 2007:297). It suggests that the interview is an empirical phenomenon in which the narratives produced are situated accounts of experience, a "productive site of reportable knowledge itself" (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995:3).

In the case of this inquiry, the 'situated accounts' of the phenomenon of marketing knowledge are examined within the domains of theory, practice and pedagogy.

Having both semi-structured and unstructured interviews allowed a lot of flexibility and freedom for the participants; the data obtained was specifically related to the overall research objectives; and a level of candidness because of the relaxed structure of the sessions and was organic in the sense that the author responded to interviewee answers and the data were based on values, opinions and perceptions of knowledge and its use. There is always a danger of bias in one-to-one interviews and the author was conscious of this. However, semi-structured interviews facilitate a more even relationship, often participant-led, allowing greater flexibility of content and direction and with much more emphasis on interviewee experience. This is of course dependent upon trust, empathy and rapport and, in the author's case, experience and expertise in the various knowledge domains was hugely advantageous. One of the difficulties with this more personal, relaxed methods is that some participants went 'off subject' but this was dealt with empathetically. One criticism of this type of approach to getting phenomenal data is supposed lack of reliability: each interview is unique; questioning is often different or phrased differently for each participant. This has to be balanced with the objective of obtaining individual accounts of individual experiences and perceptions and the rich data which comes from that. The group interviews were more difficult and (in terms of reliability) would be difficult to repeat), given the different dynamics at play. The two student focus groups tended to be interviewer-led; the one with academics a more evenly spread experience.

3.11.3 **Justification for manual data analysis methods**

The question arises as to how data should be analysed and interpreted. A manual approach has been selected, and the use of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) – namely NVivo – has been rejected based on certain epistemological, ontological and practical criteria. The main reasons for rejecting a computer-assisted method of data analysis and interpretation were:

- A concern that, as Rodik and Primorak (2015:2) suggest, the inherent assumptions in the software architecture "interfere in the qualitative research process and will result in the loss of shades of meaning and interpretation that qualitative research can bring" Computer software is best suited to inquiries where the data needs to be quantified (Bait, 2003). The overall positivistic epistemological position is as Robert and Wilson *op. cit.* p.5 suggest: "Computing technology assumes a positivistic approach to the natural world that sees it as being composed of objects that humans can study,

understand and manipulate… [but] the goal of qualitative researchers is to try and see things from the perspective of human actors".

- Interacting personally with the data gave a tangible, reflexive element which somehow seemed forced and less natural than with a manual approach.

- Looking for clues, themes and meaning amongst the data facilitated a more intuitive, organic and less mechanistic quality to the data analysis.

- Pragmatism: the time factor in learning and using the NVivo software.

- Computer mediation between researcher/data interaction is not perfect in terms of rich data interpretation (Bringer, Johnston and Brackenridge, 2004: 250).

Roberts and Wilson (2002:21) advise that "the first and foremost point to make about the use of computers in qualitative analysis is that computers do not and cannot analyse qualitative data". Similarly, Charmaz (*op. cit.* p.15) expresses a cautionary note on the use of data capture generally: "Methods alone – whatever they might be – do not generate good research or astute analysis. How researchers *use* methods matters". Thompson and Barrettt (1997:60) perfectly capture this stating that "actually hearing what the data have to say rather than splicing them into arbitrary units searching for topics, themes and meanings". This is entirely consistent with allowing theory to emerge from the data, the hallmark of qualitative data analysis based on grounded theory.

3.11.4 **Transcription of evidence and interviewee participation in the process**

When adopting an appropriate research methodology, a pertinent question which helps guide our approach to research is 'What is actually meant by data?' According to Glaser (2002), "All is data": both the research setting, participants and everything about the research topic can be construed, and more importantly, used as data.

Qualitative research can provide a more flexible method of investigation by analysing *whilst the data is being captured*. It is a realistic approach to research, where social phenomena are observed in context.

Quantitative researchers tend to regard experiential empirical data extracted by qualitative interview as "unreliable, impressionistic and not objective" (Denzin and Lincoln, *op. cit.* p.12). From a qualitative perspective, however, interviews can provide insightful data if interviewers have "a respect for and curiosity about what people say, and a systematic effort to really hear and understand what people tell you" (Rubin and Rubin, 1995:17).

A key element of data capture and analysis is the transcription of evidence. Davidson (2009) describes two methods used by qualitative researchers: 'naturalised' transcription and 'denaturalised' transcription. The former is not filtered or altered and focuses on discourse detail and tries to let the data 'breathe'; the latter presents evidence which has been altered to extract some socio-cultural characteristics. Naturalised transcription allows a more authentic interpretation of data, reporting the actual words and nuance of the participant's experience. For that reason, all data captured have been recorded in the naturalised transcription manner.

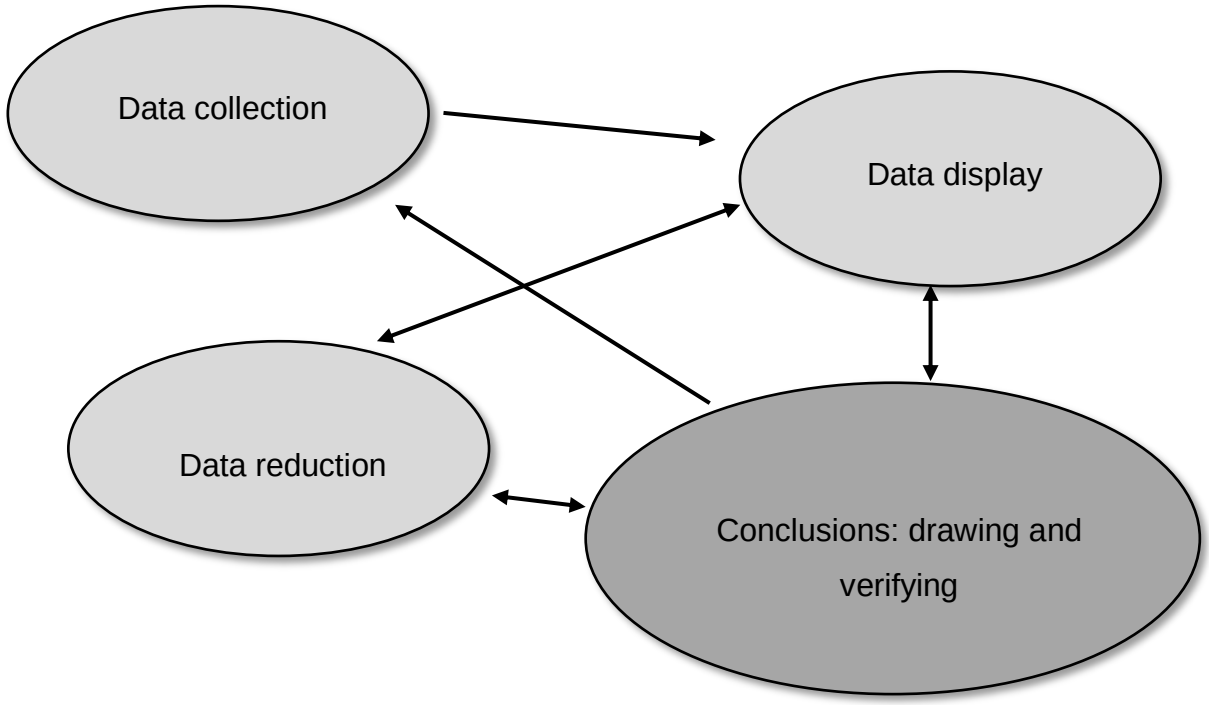
Though not a common occurrence in qualitative research, some researchers advocate a more active role for interviewees in the transcription process (Hagens, Dobrow, & Chafe, 2009). This may ensure validity (Polit & Beck, 2007), enhance the quality of data capture or underline the credibility of the transcripts (Davidson, 2009). Of all the data capture in this inquiry, the two case analyses and three of the face-to-face interviews allowed access of transcripts or mid-interview clarification or amplification to take place. Where online interviews or questionnaires were used, this was not deemed to be beneficial nor necessary.

3.11.5 **The logic of coding in qualitative data analysis**

Braun and Clarke (2006:79) described thematic analysis as "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data". As Robson (2002:387) suggests, "before we can interpret our findings, the measures that lie within the data need careful teasing out". Grounded approaches, like most qualitative methods of data capture and analysis, use 'coding'. However, there is a difference between conventional qualitative coding and grounded methods: the former uses codes for social processes not for themes or topics. The objective of the iterative approach is to define and refine the emerging theoretical categories. In grounded coding, the emphasis is on *action* which it embeds in the codes and which are part of the iterative data capture/analysis of the process. This is a heuristic almost 'trial and error' device to focus on initial close coding or "fragmentation of the data" (Glaser,). Here, examining data from the participants' perspective, tacit assumptions are being examined and explication of what the

actions and meanings actually are. Corbin and Strauss (2008) ask "when, how and with what consequences" are participants acting? What the researcher must look for in the data are themes, relationships and connections; this is facilitated by structuring the data for analysis through coding. In grounded theory methodology, coding is "the core process … through which conceptual abstraction of data and its reintegration as theory takes place" (Holton, 2007:265). It compels us to interrogate the data that has already been collected. It is a 'check and balance' stage in the research process to allow reflection on the meaning of our data and confirm the direction of travel for the next stage of the process. This reflexivity and reiteration of data is an essential ingredient of this approach. The "constant testing and revision of themes and sub-

Figure 3.7 Components of data analysis: interactive model



Source: Miles, B and Huberman, A. M. (1994)

themes is necessary" (Corbin and Strauss, 2008:204). This is clearly seen in *Figure 3.7 Components of data analysis: interactive model* below, where the components of data analysis are seen to be interrelated and the process of 'check and balance' is an iterative aspect prevalent in this type of interrogation of qualitative data.

Coding is basically a filtering process to faciltate structure in the data to allow creativity in its interpretation. The interactive, iterative nature of qualitative research, specifically here using

grounded theory methods, is a reflexive process where data is analysed as it is captured. Birks and Mills (*op. cit.* p.10) describe this as "the process of concurrent data generation or collection and analysis", and it is fundamental to a grounded theory research design. The inductive nature of this process - concurrent collection and analysis - involves the constant, iterative action of comparison, until the theory emerges from the data. Indeed, it is more accurate to call this abduction. As Reichertz (*op.cit.* p.220) suggests: "Abduction is a cerebral process, an intellectual act, a mental leap, that brings together things which one had never associated with one another: a cognitive logic of discovery".

Saldana (2013) lists the levels of data analysis in the methodology used as:

- First level categorisation or 'open coding' (attributes, descsriptions, emotions, evaluations, *In Vivo* coding, narratives, values and themes). In first-cycle coding (or sorting), codes can be categorised in order to establish any themes by, for example, investigating relationships between the codes.

- Second level categorisation (relationship between codes, code frequencies, underlying connections and meaning). the *occurrence* of a group of codes may reveal how the codes happen.

- Core categorisation (pattern coding, focused coding, axial, theoretical coding). and the *sequence* with which a code or group of codes happens may indicate some triggering or stimulation between codes; the *frequency* with which codes occur may be indicative of meaning within the various data.

- Analysis, interpretation and integration. The *essence* of underlying meaning in the data will be seen in observing and analysing the data.

- The process of "concurrent data generation or collection and analysis" (Birks and Mills, *op. cit.*) is depicted below in *Figure 3.8 Essentials of grounded research.* Initially, data is coded before more data is collected. Written records (sometimes referred to as 'memos'), are ongoing activity which help generate theory. They describe *purposeful sampling* as the researcher making a strategic decision as well as being about what or who will provide the most information-rich sources of data to meet their analytical needs. The practice of writing memos allows the mapping out of possible sources to

sample as well as faciliating an audit trail of research. All data are constantly compared and linked where applicable.

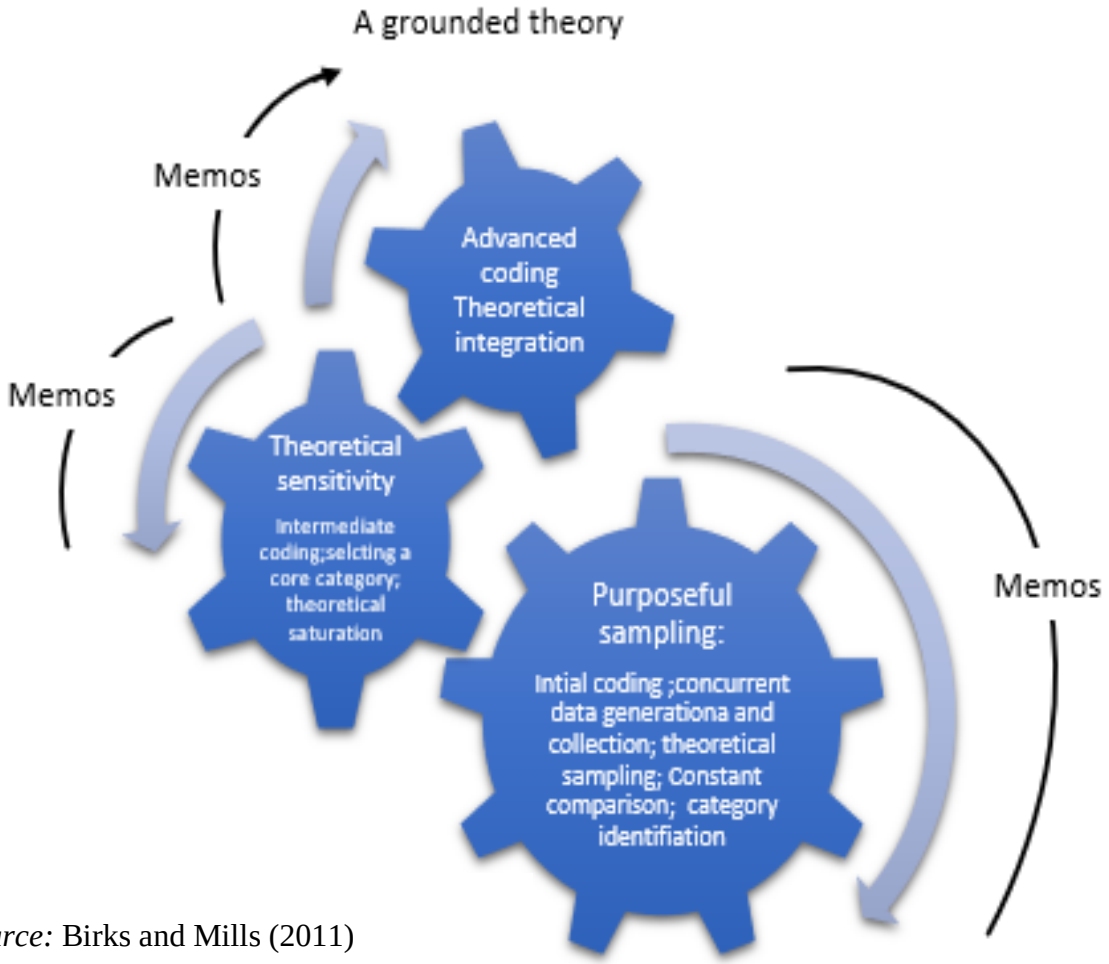
- *Theoretical sensitivity* refers to the relative sophistication of the researcher in terms of personal intellectual capacity and experiences and the nature of the topic being investigated. The next stage – *advanced coding* – follows on from intial coding and is where individual categeories are devloped from connecting sub-categories, as well as category-to-category connections. The subtle difference in these stages is that initial coding *fractures* the data whereas intermediate coding *reconnects* the data. This like a jigsaw where sorting pieces into groups allows a systematic piecing together of similar themes or linkages to join data together. Axial coding refers to the disaggregation of core themes and relating codes to concepts. A category denotes a phenomenon such as a research problem, an issue or any happening which has some social significance to a group of participants. Identifying a *core category* may be about addressing the grounded theory as an holistic entity. *Theoretical saturation* is the point where there is no more conceptual categories to be drawn from the data. Variations in process are normally explained in grounded research to allow *theoretical integration*. This is applicable to the research data analyses In the integrated analysis of findings in *Section 3* where clear themes are seen to emerge from the data and start to from patterns of meaning which contribute to the overall understanding of the research extarcted from the various participants.

The purpose of this fracturing and reconnecting of data is to look for:

- *causal conditions* (influences on the phenomenon);
- the *phenomenon* of action and interaction being examined;
- *strategies* for addressing that phenemenon;
- and the *context* of the phenomenon.

From this process, emerges theory generated by the researcher. A visual display is included below in *Figure 3.8* to illustrate the interrelationships of the axial codings. Theory comes from these relationships. Whichever approach is taken in coding or organising the data, the necessity for recording data, whether manual or computer-assisted, is essential; whichever method of

Figure 3.8 Essentials of grounded research



Source: Birks and Mills (2011)

recording is chosen, it is imperative to retain the context within which the data has been captured. The creation of codes – the process of preparing for data analysis – helps with the organisation and interpretation of data. In fact, coding is essentially the analysis and we are looking for a narrative to emerge from the data. Consideration of this must be done prior to conducting research but also during and after data has been collected. This, if successful, will pull the thread of the themes together.

3.11.6 **Identifying patterns in the data**

As has been discussed above, identifying patterns in the data and analysing recurring themes, looking for inter-group occurrences can be helped by a pre-specified scheme of coding. Coding is a method of constructing an analytical framework and is pivotal in data collection, meaning-making interpretation and identifying any themes in the data. The purpose of coding is: to try to reduce the data without losing any of the essential meaning, collecting any significant ideas which refer back to the research objectives; understand the phenomenon being analysed; and to develop a theory or construct from the emerging categories and themes (Saldana, 2013). This is done in a sequence: coding, sorting, synthesising and theorising. Identifying 'themes' or patterns in qualitative research is essential in data analysis in order to identify and describe phenomena. Themes are patterns (or sometimes abstract concepts) which can be targeted before (in the form of the research aims and objectives) and identified during and after data collection. Thematic analysis can be done using extant knowledge in the form of texts (review of literature) and from the context of the phenomena being investigated. Social science researchers induce themes from data: open coding is used in grounded research; qualitative analysis or latent coding are used in content analysis.

3.11.7 **Experiential empirical data collection methods**

In terms of the methodology used for empirical research with the various marketing constituents, this was undertaken in the tradition of Gadamer's (1960/1998) and Heidegger's (1927/2008) hermeneutic phenomenology using 'conversational' interviews (van Manen, 2001). Marton (1994) suggests that "Whatever phenomenon or situation people encounter, we can identify a limited number of qualitatively different and logically interrelated ways in which the phenomenon or the situation is experienced and understood". Phenomenological perspectives (and therefore, the 'phenomenographic' interview) advocates allowing people to reflect on their *lebenswelt* (life world) from the 'inside'; rich data is captured from experience of the interviewee. In the spirit of this approach, a strategic choice of it is based participants – purposive sampling – representative of all significant marketing communities participated with the intention of gleaning individual narrative evidence experiential. Participants were asked to of discuss: how they had initially been exposed to Marketing; what their orientation (eg: practitioner, academic, teacher etc.) was; and what was their perception of and perspective on marketing knowledge and its usage in theory and/or in practice. This methodology can produce

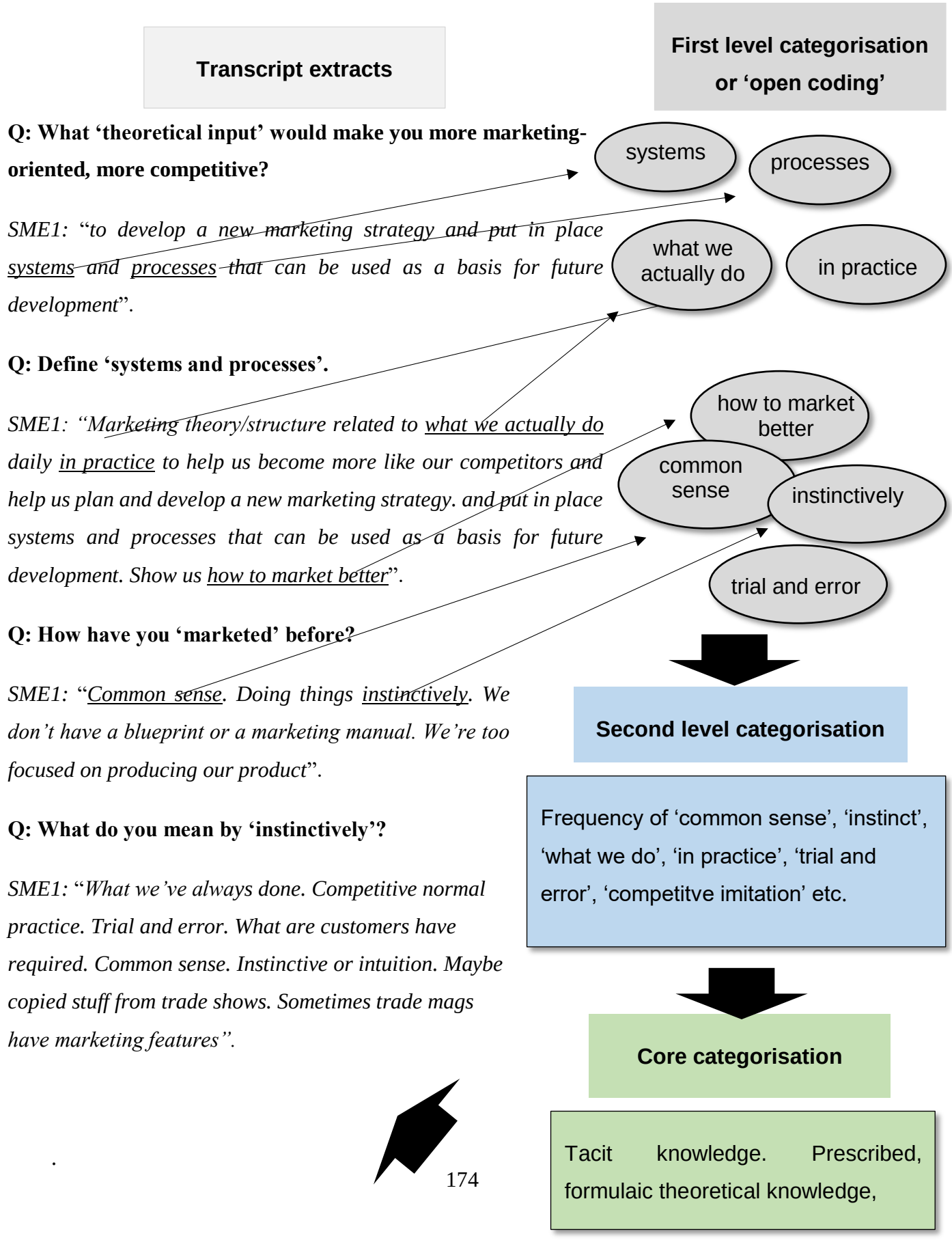
rich data from these types of interviews because it is based on the participants' subjective interpretations of their lived experience within their respective *habitus.* Bourdieu (1985:170) described habitus as "a structuring structure, which organises practices and the perception of practices"

3.11.8 **The application of coding and interpretation of data in this inquiry**

In trying to explain the application of coding in this inquiry, Drake's (2010:88) remark that the interpretation of data is "not a matter of looking harder or more closely but of seeing what frames our seeing" is particularly apposite. Coding involved using a first cycle of 'pre-set codes' (these are often referred to as '*a priori'* codes and relate directly back to the research objectives and reflect the conceptual nature of this inquiry: the roots and uses of marketing knowledge; the perceptions of the different constituencies; the nature of tacit and explicit knowledge. These pre-set codes are discussed fully in *Chapter 9 Conclusions.*

In *Figure 3.9 '*Coding themes emerging from data', a visual representation is given to demonstrate how initial coding emerged from a series of extended interviews as part of the case analysis featured in *Chapter 6.*

Figure 3.9 Coding themes emerging from data



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3.12 **Validity of methodology adopted**

Proof of the quality and rigour of the research is of paramount importance. Qualitative research is fundamentally different in philosophical approach and methodology, and, because it is based on contextual, subjective, individual interpretation, questions of validity come under much closer scrutiny. "It doesn't count because it's subjective" (Smith, 2000:45) is a criticism often levelled at qualitative research. As Reichertz *op. cit.* claims, qualitative induction is not a valid form of validity but a valid form of *inference*. As Kvale (*op. cit.* p.1) argues, "objectivity in itself is a rather subjective notion". Here, 'validity' is interpreted as integrity and application of methods and 'reliability' refers to consistency. As discussed in *Section 3.10.3* above, validity in qualitative research cannot be proven, but it can be supported. For research to be deemed 'valid', robustness must be demonstrated in ensuring quality through rigour, credibility and ethical behaviour. Brownlie, Hewer and Ferguson (2007) declare that relevance is all about the researcher making choices between theory and appropriate methodology. For example, the process of using phenomenology as an analytical methodis questioned in some quarters as being without scientific rigour. Credibility refers to truth, value or believability (Leninger, 1994), but also authenticity and trustworthiness. Paterson and Higgs (2005:352) suggest that "an important way to achieve credibility is to enact the research philosophy or, in other words, for method as logic of justification to inform method as technique".

Table 3.6 Criteria for judging validity in qualitative research

Traditional criteria for judging quantitative research	**Alternative criteria for judging qualitative research**
Internal validity	*Credibility*: Since the aim of qualitative research is to present and analyse the phenomena in its correct context, establishing the credibility or believability of findings from triangulation and acknowledging the perspective of the participants in the research.
External validity	*Transferability*: If the context within which the original research takes place is thoroughly explained, the results can be transferred or generalised into other contexts.
Reliability	

	Dependability: Reliability measures dependability and consistency. Usually this is assumed to be replicability or repeatability, but observing the same thing twice is disputed by qualitative researchers. More relevant to qualitative approaches is the idea that context, which is constantly changing, must be clearly explained.
Objectivity	*Confirmability*: The extent to which the results can be corroborated with others. The data needs to needs to be audited to check for bias or distortion. The degree of reflexivity shown can enhance confirmability.

Source: (Guba and Lincoln, 1998)

Qualitative researchers who practise an alternative subjective philosophical approach compared to hypothetico-deductive research reject the quantitative mono-criteria for validity as not being reflective of qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Their comparison with quantitative validity (shown above in *Table 3.6 Criteria for judging validity in qualitative research*) is an excellent delineation of comparative criteria for quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Whilst the arguments for alternative criteria for assessing validity in interpretive inquiries may be sound, the comparisons do have their limitations such as 'external validity' and 'reliability' which have statistical sampling and true score as their bases and are not directly applicable to qualitative research which use non-numeric methods. The very nature of qualitative research does present problems. For example, the *positionality* of the researcher [as has been discussed above in *Section 2.6.3*], does make objective analysis of subjective subject matter difficult. The 'insider' researcher, immersed in the capture and analysis of data, may be susceptible to data distortion because of bias. There might be inaccuracy of description or inferred because of behaviour or verbal participant accounts being reflected through the subjective lens of the researcher. as the case study used or range of sample data extracted might be too specific or non-representative. There might be difficulties with case study research is generalisability (Yin, 1994) in making the data generalisable. Case analyses are necessarily defined by, and therefore restricted by, context. Transferring data findings from one context to another may be not be possible. The research might offer a limited view of the phenomena as the researcher's data might not be comprehensive or omit key perspectives. The research might reinforce existing

theory, reflect a 'normative' view of the phenomena and not be critical of established premises, thus limiting creativity.

However, there are some ways in which these problems can be addressed:

- Accuracy of 'description' can be improved by accurate recording of data and possibly verifying with the research participants themselves; accuracy of 'inferred meanings' by using a wide range of participant 'types', using the language expressed by participants to ensure 'thick' descriptions are representative, repeating the exercise by reiterating data and by considering alternative perspectives.

- Generalisibility, whilst difficult with this type of inquiry, can be ensured by: demonstrating the representative nature of the sample used; checking that it is consistent with research aims and objectives; using rich descriptions of the context within which the research has been extracted; linking theories and approaches to other fields.

- In addition, whilst the use of qualitative interviews in an empirical study such as this is entirely appropriate, justification of what constitutes validity in terms of authenticity and credibility of interviewees must be proffered. The dominant publication and PhD thesis conventions dictate method of participant selection, data retrieval and reflexive commentary on researcher involvement, bias and validity. According to Patton (2015), "this implies a need to state the number and characteristics of participants interviewed and the reason for their selection". In order to enable new insights and rich understandings, validity depends on the participants chosen and the balance between their coverage and the quality of data within their responses (Alvesson and Ashcraft, 2012). Debate about this varies between qualitative scholars (Baker and Edwards, 2012) about what is considered methodologically valid, dependent upon individual philosophical perspectives.

The notion of *cumulative collective knowledge*, contingent on cultural context, is essential here. Antecedents of this perspective can be seen in Dewey's (1938) observation that "neither inquiry nor the most abstractly formal set of symbols can escape from the cultural matrix in which they live, move and have their being" (p.20). Indeed, the pragmatists' perspective is that new knowledge, integral to experience, must be empirically checked by peers within the group

being researched. This is an important aspect as to whether this type of research has 'validity'. Dewey (1929) asserted that the "test of the validity of the idea by the consequences of these operations establishes connectivity with concrete experience" (p.114). Knowledge feeds into action; action feeds into knowledge. Marketing knowledge in practice is reified in theory; marketing knowledge in theory is verified in practice.

Yardley, (2000:219) offers a comprehensive summary for assessing the validity of qualitative research: sensitivity to content; commitment to rigour; transparency and coherence; and impact and importance. This comprehensive list has been used as a framework to offer proof of validity for this inquiry and is discussed below in *Table 3.7 Proof of validity for this inquiry*.

Table 3.7: Proof of validity for this inquiry

Yardley's (2000) criteria for judging validity	**Criteria applied to this inquiry for judging validity**
Sensitivity to content	
Contextual theory and previous research on the phenomenon	• A comprehensive literature review, analysing the origins and development of knowledge both philosophically and subject-specific.
Extant knowledge from relevant literature	• Rigour in analysing and integrating relevant extant literature – complete immersion in specific texts and published research as well as peripheral but compatible research from other disciplines. This has taken the form of an exegesis of a broad and extensive literature review. • Reiteration and integration of theory with data captured. • Adherence to hermeneutic principle of examining whole to specific to whole: marketing meta-narratives, power, incommensurable epistemes, specific contexts.
Awareness of socio-cultural setting	• The 'ontological dimension' described in *Figure 7.4* in *Chapter 7* illustrates how the various marketing constituencies are grouped together, the shared characteristics and dynamics of their ontologies in their social setting.

Empathy with participants' perspectives	• Competency criterion met: researcher expertise as a marketing academic, teacher, writer and practitioner is enhanced by the quality and expertise of the participants and the expert guidance of supervisors. • Dialogue between researcher and participants. • Reiteration of data with participants. • The 'horizons' of the participants and knowledge of their particular contexts and backgrounds.
Ethical issues	• Informed voluntary consent was obtained prior to any interviews, focus groups or questionnaires. • No coercion to take part. • Participants fully informed of the intent and purpose of the inquiry and expectations of the individual participant. • Trust in non-disclosure was achieved by the anonymity of concealed identity. anonymity of participants, individual or organisational names (except for obvious institutional entities such as the Marketing Educational Provider and the Academy of Marketing) were carefully coded (see *Section 3* above). Informed consent was granted by prior communications. • No manipulation of data or slant put on findings (only interpretation). • Participant validation of data.
Commitment to rigour	
In-depth engagement with the subject matter	• The project aims at examining the roots and uses of marketing knowledge to add to the body of knowledge, add value in a creative manner and propose both a knowledge model and a better approach to marketing pedagogy. Therefore, the project was deemed to be worthy of undertaking and these aims have been met.
Methodological skills (The key here is reliability (dependability and consistency).	• Use of multiple indicators and data capture methods; • Use of pilot tests prior to interviews and questionnaires. • Development of clearly conceptualised ideas developing emerging theory; • Discussion of findings with participants to reinforce interpretations.

Thorough data collection	• Grounded research methods, across a broad range of marketing participants, through varied qualitative methods of data capture and analysis, were used to provide rich and comprehensive data. • Verbatim accounts of participant testimonies.
Depth and breadth of analysis	• Thematic coded analyses, extracted from a broad range of marketing constituencies, through varied qualitative methods of data capture and analysis, were used to provide accurate rich and comprehensive data analysis and interpretation.
Method and data analysis transparency	• All interviewees were fully briefed and inducted in the objectives, method and intention of the research methods. • Accuracy of recording and transparency of interpretation.
Transparency and coherence	
Clarity and strength of argument	• Research aims are clear with a broad range but precise focus.
Fit between theory and method	• A unique integration of theoretical and empirical perspectives is present throughout *Chapters 4-6.*
Reflexivity	• The author is conscious of his role in the etic and emic nature of the inquiry and the researcher's positionality in engaging with the subject and subjects of research. • Accounting for personal bias in collection and analysis.
Impact and importance	
Enrichment of understanding	• The author believes the findings of this work will have a major contribution to marketing, theory, practice and pedagogy.

Fit between theory and method	• The methodology uses grounded theory principles throughout and is consistent with the 'apperception' logic of *a priori* knowledge (eg: literature review).
Socio-cultural relevance	• The changing nature of education and the evolving need for practical impact of theory is reflected in the relevance of the work.

Source: Based on Yardley (2000)

3.13 **Ethical standards**

If qualitative research is about interpreting other people's interpretation of phenomena, research ethics is about researchers reacting with the people they are studying, involving the examination of people's experience within the context of their natural environment. Implicit in this process of describing a phenomenon is:

- representing the 'true' participant voice;
- the notion of power and relationships between participating parties;
- the researcher's lack of objectivity in essentially interpreting the interpretation of others;
- and, the actual research design itself.

Ethical behaviour is at the heart of all research and yet, according to Whitely (2002:26), it is "the researcher's own integrity which is the arbitrator of ethical behaviour". Sieber (1992:3) observed that "the ethical researcher creates a mutually respectful, 'win-win' relationship in which subjects are pleased to participate candidly".

Therefore, when conducting qualitative research, ethical principles must be applied at all times – an 'ethical protocol' if you will - in order to achieve the overall aims of the research inquiry whilst maintaining the rights of the participants involved in the inquiry. Any inquiry which involves people as research participants must be conducted with care and protection for those taking part, handled with the best interests of individuals, groups and the wider societal stakeholders, and uphold the most ethical standards in terms of confidentiality, personal risk

and carried out with the consent of the participants themselves. Voluntary participation assumes no coercion; informed consent assumes full disclosure of information.

Research which involves vulnerable or young people may cause concern; this doesn't apply to this inquiry. Aiming for a balanced relationship between research partners will encourage trust, more accurate disclosure of information and make parties aware of any ethical issues such as autonomy, beneficence (doing good and preventing harm) and justice.

A comprehensive list of ethical issues which need to be considered by researchers is offered by Miles and Huberman (1994:290):

- Worthiness of the project
- Competency boundaries
- Informed consent
- Benefits, costs and reciprocity
- Harm and risk
- Honesty and trust
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Integrity and quality

Although every piece of recorded data can be traced back to the original source, origin of data in terms of employee's name or resident institution have been disguised within this document. Anonymity has also been maintained by reporting in a non-specific transcript format and individual generalised coding.

3.14 **Chapter review**

In this chapter, the second of two in *Section 2 Literature review and research design*, an exposition of the general direction of the inquiry, the framework for research design and methodological approaches taken, as well as the formulation and execution of the research plan were discussed in detail. An in-depth review outlining the rationale of the choice and

justification of data capture and analysis methods, themes and relationships in the data, together with an elucidation of how the various marketing constituency discourses in the study are to be contextualised, formed the main structure and content. Relating methodology to the achievement of the research aims, justification for the appropriateness of an inductive qualitative research approach in marketing inquiry, with its separate elements of grounded theory hermeneutics, was given. A detailed account of how and why research participants were selected, together with the influence of researcher positionality has on the research approach chosen complements this broad explanation. Possible approaches to research, together with the rejection of unsuitable methodologies are reviewed. Discussion on the iterative nature of qualitative research, the importance of subjectivity, the danger of interpretation and the need for reflexivity, flavoured this debate. Finally, the question of criteria for validity and reliability in this inquiry together with the ethics of representing the 'true' participant voice whilst maintaining researcher objectivity is covered.

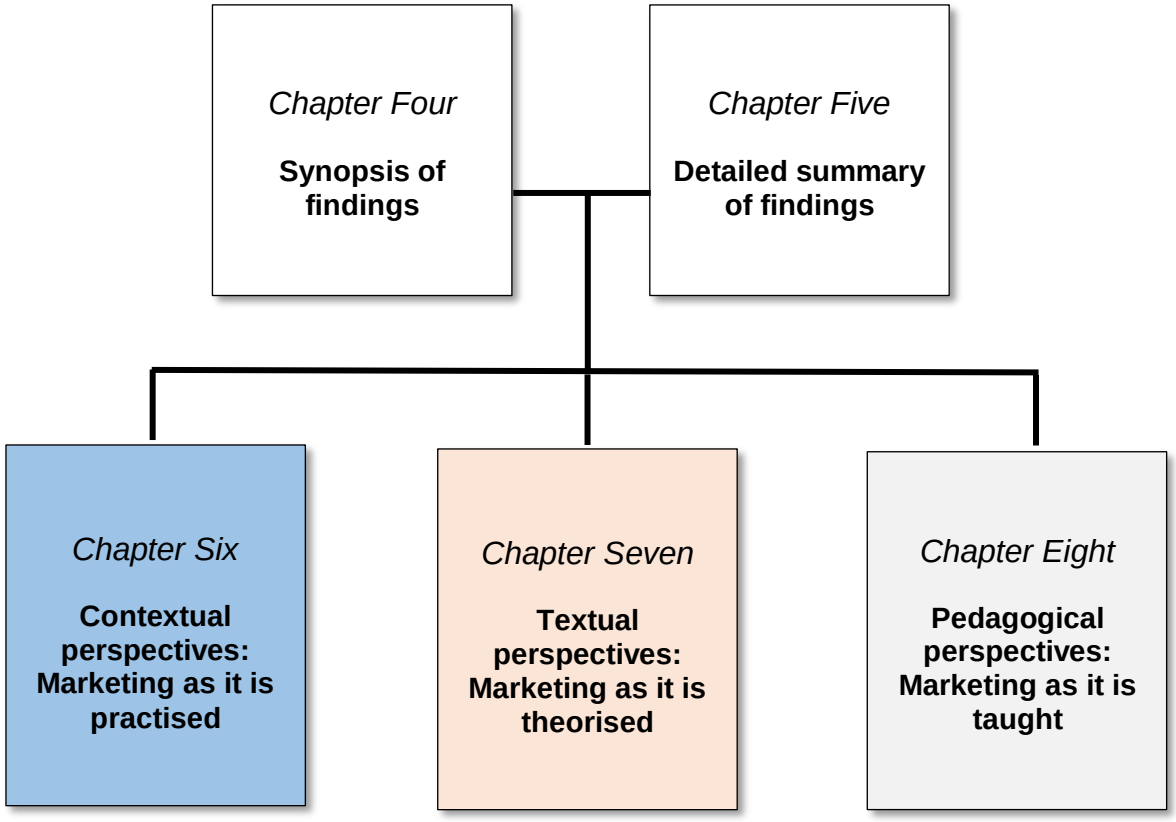
This chapter, together with *Chapter 2 Philosophical underpinnings for an inquiry into marketing knowledge*, acts as an extended preamble to *Section Three Intergrated analysis of findings* where the results of the data captured and analysed from all constituencies both textual, contextual and pedgaogical marketing knowledge domains are discussed in detail. It is of vital importance in describing the philosophical logic - the epistemological bases and values of what constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice – as well as the methodological integrity and the contexts within which the programme of case analyses, individual in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires have taken place, and begin to look at the impact various marketing constituencies have on the production of marketing knowledge.

Section Three Integrated analysis of findings

Introduction to Section Three Integrated analysis of findings

As outlined in the opening section *Chapter One Introduction*, the aims of this inquiry are to examine and evaluate the epistemological bases and values of what constitutes both theoretical and practical marketing knowledge and show how these two often diverging but disparate epistemes connect and disconnect. Set against the discussion on philosophical underpinnings in *Chapter Two* and the justifiaction for the chosen research methodology and methods in *Chapter Three*, *Section Three* discusses the results of the data captured and analysed from all constituencies in all marketing knowledge domains.

Figure 4.1 Microstructure of Section Two Literature review and research design



The contents of *Section 3 Integrated analysis of findings* are split into three distinct narratives – contextual, textual and pedagogical perspectives – and are illustrated in relation to each other above in *Figure 4.1*. There are two brief summative introductory chapters – *Chapter 4: Synopsis of findings* and *Chapter 5: Detailed summary of findings* – which discusses in general the outcomes of the research. The subsequent presentation of data capture and analyses in

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 features data taken from all empirical evidence and has been organised in the following manner:

Precisé vignettes discussed as reflective of praxis.

Individual summative extracted compared 'common' and 'specific' coded data. ('Common' data are that which recur frequently; 'specific' data are those peculiar to the context of the participant).

Verbatim transcripts are available to view in the appendices.

Section 3 features a unique juxtaposition of documentary word and deed, combining literature review *in text* with rich empirical data *in context*. This informs the structure of this thesis and has the advantage of helping to more easily demonstrate the linkages between marketing theory and marketing practice.

In addition, a comprehensive final coding summary is presented in *Section Four Contributions and conclusions* as part of the analysis and interpretation of all data.

4 *Chapter Four* Synopsis of findings

4.1 Outline of chapter

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the detailed discussion of data in the following *Chapters* 5, 6, 7 and 8. It maps out the key coding themes which have emerged from the data, how they are related to each other and shows how this is consistent with the research aims of this inquiry.

4.2 Introduction

In a very real sense, research findings are conditioned by the choice between research paradigm, the type of data required, and what is deemed to be the appropriate collection methods. In constructivist research, "the investigator and the object of investigations are … interactively linked so that the 'findings' are literally created as the investigation proceeds" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:207). As Cupchick (2001) observes: "In the social world, phenomena are difficult to observe because they are not restricted to sense-data but involve the application of judgement", possessing a coherent structure and observed against a social background. Accordingly, this section on findings will show that this inquiry is largely supported by abductive argument as both the reasoning and indeed the conclusions are not based on deductive, syllogistic reasoning but rest on *inference*.

Some of the findings confirmed the premises implicit in the research objectives set out at the start of the work; some findings were not expected; and some of the findings needed a creative, interpretation based on experience as well as intellectual intuition. What is presented in this chapter is the 'best explanation' of the phenomena being examined: it is the author's interpretation of the individual participant's interpretation of their perception of that phenomena.

The findings described in the following sections are extracts from research which was undertaken over a period of years, both formally and informally, both intuitively and consciously. The argument is ampliative, augmenting the original conception of marketing knowledge with an original perspective which has emerged from rich experiential data.

Before the detailed specific discussions and commentary in the following chapters, it is useful to describe and consider the overall findings individually and how they relate to each other as

part of a holistic perspective from which the ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model*** has emerged. This is a characteristically hermeneutic way of examining data and will help appreciation of the comprehensive nature of this framework and its practical application. It frames the author's original contribution to knowledge, attempting to explicate and contextualise the full range of empirical experiential evidence from all constituencies and augmenting understanding by integrating theory with data.

By using grounded theory within a phenomenological methodology, this inquiry has interrogated qualitative data captured through case analyses, interviews, focus groups questionnaires using a process of thematic analysis. The method of generating and identifying replicated categories, (which can therefore be grouped), was used, allowing coding to extract meaning from collated themes. This process, done systematically from participants' actual experiences and interpretation, provided a degree of rigour and robustness needed to ensure its relevance in use.

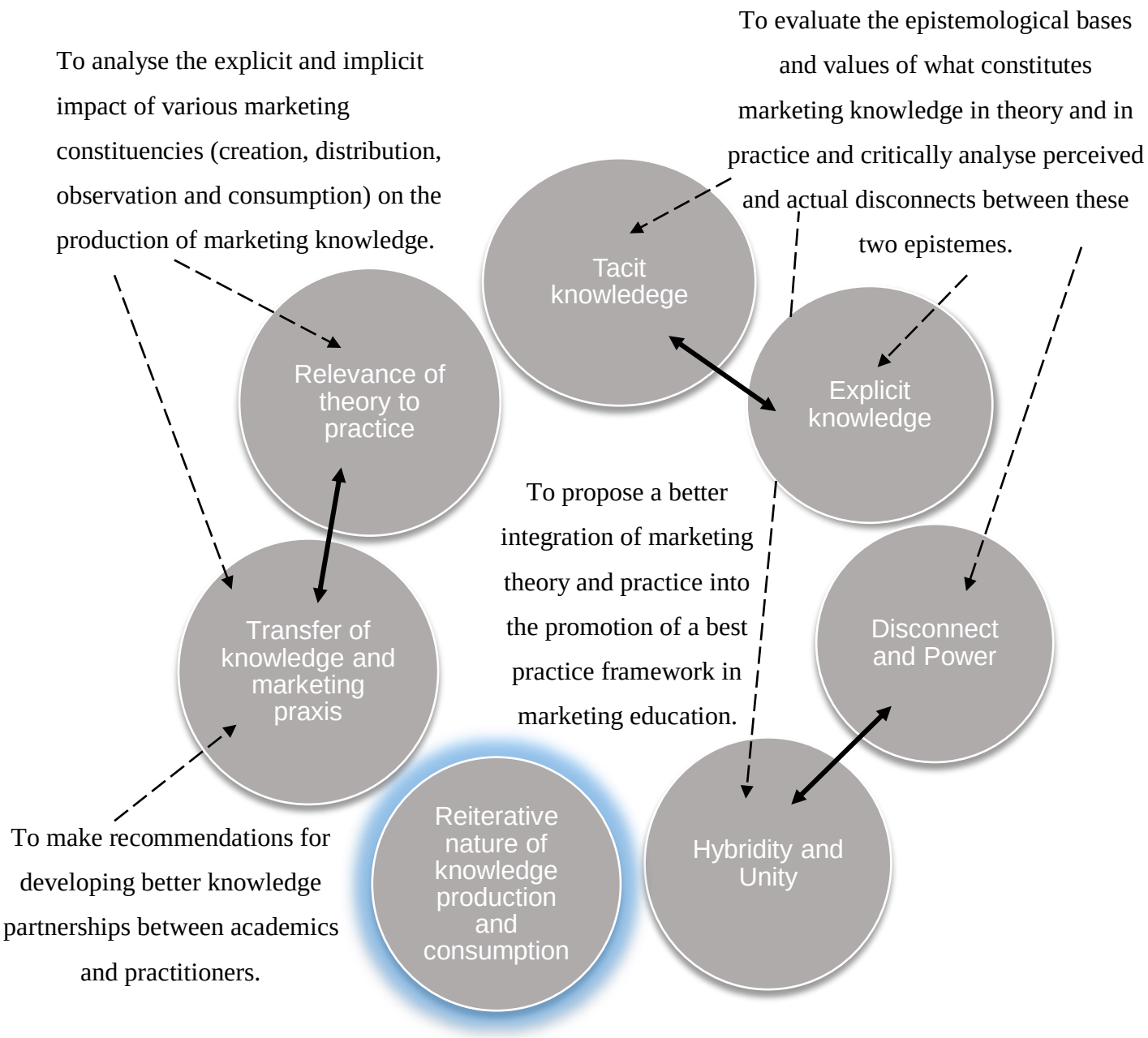
4.3 Brief synopsis of findings

In general, the findings are consistent with the research aims of this inquiry and are confirmation of the dynamics of marketing theory and practice and how marketing knowledge is conceived and consumed. They are illustrated in relation to each other as well as to the inquiry's research aims in *Figure 4.2* and summarised below.

- **The imbalance of power**: There is evidence that the hegemony of power still lies with the academy although the need and indeed desire for practice-based theory is becoming much more prevalent. One interesting aspect of the findings was that the confirmation of asymmetry of influence in knowledge generation was not just a reflection of the vested interests of the separate knowledge domains of theory and practice, but also acknowledgement of the silo effects of those domains: in other words, they accentuate difference and indifference.

- **The polarities and connections between the two epistemes of theory and practice:** Whilst there is an undoubted historical separation or disconnection between the knowledge domains of theory and practice, there is also evidence of communality and collegiality. Reinforced by pedagogical perspectives, a possible hybrid approach combining practice-based theory and theory-based practice is borne out by the data.

Figure 4.2 Final coding themes related to each other and to research aims



Source: Author's illustration

- **The evidence of both tacit and explicit knowledge:** Data from practitioners emphasises the 'informed intuition' of tacit knowledge often entrenched in the confined world of practice, often without reference to theoretical or conceptual guidelines. The data shows that where theory which is practicable is evident, this is in fact reified practice. Giving concrete conceptual form to practice is necessary but there is evidence that this does not

bring academia closer to practitioners merely regurgitates theory and offers little new to practitioners.

- **The transfer of knowledge and the relevance of theory to practice:** Transferring tacit knowledge successfully from practice to theory can be difficult. Findings in this area locate *practical* knowledge and *theoretical* knowledge as separated by ontology (what knowledge is 'true') and epistemology (what method is best to find that 'truth') and the 'gap' between the two is nearly always framed as a knowledge transfer dilemma. Evidence shows that the diffusion of marketing theory, translating conceptual frameworks into context is a barrier because of the lack of practicability and also reluctance of practitioners to risk altering practice heuristics. An engaged scholarship (van de Venn and Johnson, 2006) is required. There has to be what Szulanski (2000) referred to as "sticky knowledge" and this is evident from the data.

- **The reiterative nature of knowledge production, distribution and consumption:** Knowledge production and consumption are often represented in normative models of marketing as respectively process and product in a linear cause-and-effect, input-and-output chain. Here the author has amplified the evidence from the data and suggests that practice counters this showing both are not always separated but part of a symbiotic, recursive and reiterative circle of production and consumption. Distributors of knowledge are becoming more practice-oriented in the presentation and evaluation of theory. This identification of the reiterative nature of knowledge identifies and acknowledges the interrelatedness, indeed inseparability of theory and practice is part of the same entity.

    - The essence of qualitative data analysis is discovering themes: emerging but often abstract constructs detected during and often after data collection, echoed in extant literature, induced from texts, reinforced by experience of the subject matter. In grounded theory, this *open* or *latent* coding is where the real rich data emerges. The process of analysis is not linear in nature but circular, iterative; themes may emerge in one interview and be sought after in subsequent interviews. It is a process which feeds back into itself. However, whilst this is organic in its execution, it still must be systematic. In the case of this inquiry, interviews were recorded or transcribed, and the incidence of recurring similar words or regular phrases were teased out of the transcripts. Textual comparison with extant literature was intentionally done alongside

theme selection for comparison and guidance. ‘Common’ codes (which are concepts occurring regularly in more than one transcript) and ‘Specific’ codes (peculiar to the participant’s specific context) are explained fully in the following *Chapters 6, 7* and *8* where they are translated into ‘concepts’ and ‘categories’ in detail.

- For immediate consideration, these initial data codes from all three domains have been grouped and summarised in final coding themes below in *Table 4.1 Initial emerging and final coding themes summary*. From this range of emerging and collated themes, a framework of elements and dynamics has been developed in the form of a new ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model*** which both includes and integrates the essence of the data captured. This exercise was a result of received wisdom, a summation of literature review, the application of experience and focusing on the research aims set out before data collection occurred.

Table 4.1 Initial emerging and final coding themes summary

Initial coding themes emerging from the data	**Final summative coding themes**
• Process knowledge • Practical strengths • Apperception • Improvisation • Function not philosophy • Learning in situ • Common sense • Informed intuition • Inherent • Learning by doing • Learning through observation • Forecasting guesswork • Recording action • Situated learning • Subject matter expertise • Innate business/marketing skills • Handed down knowledge • Instinctive • Trial and error • Internal processes • Practice-informed knowledge	Tacit knowledge

• Family firm custom and practice • Questioning practice • Practical objectives • The ‘norm’ • Business-to-business history	
• Theoretical • Prescribed • Impractical • Useful • Scientific • Formulaic • Systems • Process • Knowledge transfer • Distribution/pricing/promotion • 4Ps/7Ps/Marketing Mix • Integrated Marketing Communications • Planning • Branding • Applied principles • Effectiveness • Institutionalised teaching • Text book teaching	Explicit knowledge
• Academics write history • Academics distort reality • Restrictions of publication • Dichotomy • Values • Theory and practice • Domains of practice and academe • Dichotomy • Too complicated • Internalised/incestuous • Theory not appreciative of real-life business • Domains of practice • Dis-location between strategy and practice • Overbearing Cartesian assumptions of theory (seeing things as ‘objects’ • Dominant discourses • Cartesian separation of mind and body	Disconnect and Power

• How they penetrate discourses. between strategists and practitioners • Narratives, metaphors • Rationality and subjectivity	
• Glue between customer and company • Dealership dynamics • Marketing dynamics • People • Knowledge • Organic linked • Interdependency of theory and practice • Joined aims • Pedagogy • Reciprocal relations/partnership • Dialectical • Subjectively negotiated • Duality • Fusion • Bilingual • Parallel/symbiosis • Dyadic relationship • Theoretical • Practical application • Parallel developments/roots	Hybridity/Unity
• Continuous reinvention • Hybrid reiteration • Adoption and adaption • Data collection and analysis	Reiteration
• Sector expertise • Category management • Tutoring • Strategic issues • Transfer of knowledge • Coaching • Formal training in theory and best practice • Applied principles • Subject matter expertise • Theory to practice mix • Useful	Transfer of knowledge

• Employability • Formal education in marketing • Disseminator of marketing knowledge • Managing/channelling expertise • Responsibility without knowledge • Misunderstanding of marketing • Lack of brand ownership • Trial and error • Community of practice • Situated learning • Following market practice • Integration of applied and practical • Cost of paying for knowledge • Practical knowledge transfer	and marketing praxis
• Purpose of theory • Not appropriate to real-life business • Too complicated • Just another language • Some of it not practical • Reflecting practitioner perspectives in academia • Vocational • Instrumental learning • Qualification • Employment • British qualification • Real-life examples • Pool of knowledge • Wealth of experience • Drawing examples from the lessons that have been experienced • Practical application • Relevance to work • Progression • Confidence • Case studies in seminars • Case studies in text book • Tutor knowledge • Experience of tutor • Employability • Examples from the tutor experience • Assignment preparation	Relevance

Source: Author's representation

4.4 **Chapter review**

This chapter acted as a summative account of all the inferences made from empirical data which has emerged from the interviews and provided a brief introduction to the detailed discussion of data in the following *Chapters* 5, 6, 7 and 8 where detailed analyses of all textual, contextual and pedagogical marketing constituencies are featured. Together with extant knowledge, the findings also demonstrated have been amplified by abductive argument to offer original insight into how marketing knowledge is conceived and consumed. This chapter presented the author's interpretation or 'best explanation' of the phenomena being examined considered results in relation to the aims and objectives of the inquiry. In addition, this provided a foundation chapter for *Section Four: Conclusions and contributions*.

5 *Chapter Five* **Detailed summary of findings**

5.1 Outline of chapter

This chapter provides a more detailed summary of the findings of research and the subsequent thorough discussion of data in the following *Chapters* 6, 7 and 8, presenting a synopsis the outcomes of empirical data taken from the interviews for all marketing constituencies featured in the research exercise, and provides rich qualitative evidence of the textual, contextual and pedagogical phenomena featured in this inquiry. It demonstrates how, together with extant knowledge, the findings have been amplified by the author to offer original insight into how marketing knowledge is conceived and consumed. And, finally, it considers the results in relation to the aims and objectives of the inquiry.

5.2 Knowledge relationships

Gummesson's (1999:32) astute observation "Knowledge can unite and divide" hits the nail on the head. He describes knowledge production as a *generative* process (in which knowledge is created), a *productive* process (where knowledge is transformed into value or relevance) and a *representative* process (how knowledge is communicated to the consumers of knowledge). It can be concurrently engineered where the process(es) are synchronous, reciprocal and sequential. This very much echoes the organic, non-linear nature of the 'marketing knowledge process' framework discussed here. Badarocco (1991), delineates knowledge that is either *migratory* (can migrate or emigrate form one domain to another) or *embedded* (knowledge that can't migrate or transfer). Embedded knowledge is the equivalent of 'frozen' or tacit knowledge; migratory knowledge is the equivalent of explicit knowledge that can be transferred. Analogous to the 'learning organisation' made famous by Senge (1990), when there is synergy in shared values and vision, a holistic perspective taken, and mutual benefit, there is the possibility, through dyadic fusion of synchronous creation of knowledge. The linkages and disconnections between theory and practice is evidenced in the viewpoints expressed in the various marketing discourses analysed in *Section 3* above, some fixed by historical hegemony, some by indifference.

The dualism of objective/subjective, theory/practice forms the bedrock of this examination of the textual and contextual domains or opposing epistemes. The dialectic of negation between orthodox logic and interpretive perspectives of knowledge is challenged by the promotion of

reframing the oppositional domains of theory and practice as a complementary duality with equal status, compatibility and reciprocal relational possibilities.

One of the keys to knowledge creation, as Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995:20) claim, "lies in the mobilisation and conversion of tacit knowledge". It is a relatively virgin territory in the case of applied fields, where "it appears that the practices related to the phenomenon of knowledge management and knowledge creation have accelerated faster than the scholarly work to explain them" (McLean, 2004:1). As Moustakas (1994:10) reminds us that "interpretation unmasks what is hidden behind the objective phenomena", something explored below.

5.2.1 **Final coding theme 1: Tacit knowledge**

Interpretation is subjective and subjective research is really a 'double process' of joint construction where the interpretation of the researcher and the interpretation of the participant are fused in a joint *social* construction of a phenomenon. The etymology of 'phenomenology' is the Greek word *phainómenon* meaning 'that which appears'. The data which throws light on the phenomenon of tacit knowledge is drawn from the *accounts* or stories of the participants. The subsequent analysis is *an* interpretation of *their* interpretation of *their* experience which is taking place. The evidence, therefore, *appears* from the data; the *appearance* of reality is through individual interpretation.

The most prominent factor which concerned the theory/practice duality which emerged from the data was tacit knowledge. Informed intuition (often counter-intuitive), established in the vacuum of historical practice, had an unshakable hold on the application of marketing.

Tacit knowledge does not arise only from the implicit acquisition of knowledge but also from the implicit processing of knowledge. When discourse occurs in a micro-context, tacit knowledge – situational learning - can be insular and unrecorded. As Saren and Brownlie (2004:7) suggest, the partly intuitive world of the practitioner whose "immanent and insistent experience and knowledge cannot be given expression through the received concepts and language of marketing", is often not expressed in text. Skålén and Hackley (2011:1) are persistent champions of the need for 'bottom-up' empirical research into marketing practice; Ardley and Quinn (2014) present an analysis examining the micro-discourses and narratives of marketing actors; whilst Herzog (2016:289) advises that analysis of practitioner discourse "can analyse practices and material realities and help immanent critique overcome its empirical

deficits". Witness this expressed by the Microbiological Organisation (*SME1)* when asked about the company's product was 'marketed'*:* "*Common sense. Doing things instinctively. We don't have a blueprint or a marketing manual. We're too focused on producing our product*".

The immanent critique used in this inquiry (which can help ground the normative claims of discourse), offers an insider perspective on practitioner tacit knowledge. Immanent, in this sense, refers to the practice and beliefs which typify the experience of a group of participants located in a context in a specific society.

It is an internal perspective, and to be internally consistent, evidence must be grounded in the experience of the participants. Eraut (2004) suggests that tacit knowledge exists in three forms:

- situational understanding rooted in experience;
- automatised, routinised procedures; and,
- the rules embedded in intuitive decision-making.

The process of coding extracted recurring incidents of this in examples such as: apperception, improvisation, learning in situ, common sense, informed intuition, inherent, learning by doing and through observation, situated learning, innate business/marketing skills and handed down knowledge. Whilst this is evident in a lot of the interviews with practitioners, there is an interesting point from the data of the inconsistency of practice. Because of the 'internal' (often isolated) nature of the practitioner, horizons can be, therefore, internalised. Amongst the wide spread of practitioners interviewed, their experience is in contexts where traditional marketing theory often has little impact. There is a discernible gap between what is said and what is practised.

However, dependent upon the historical and structural nature of the businesses examined, theory may or may not be applied, or at best not recognised in tacit knowledge production and use even if this is the case. This does make the application of theory – even one grounded in practice – difficult to transfer. There would be a certain practitioner resistance to adoption of practice given an unnecessary theoretical basis.

5.2.2 **Final coding theme 2: Explicit knowledge**

Explicit knowledge, particularly with a practice-based phenomenon such as marketing, is knowledge that can be codified through concepts, articulated in text, and can be expressive of assumed formulaic practice, and, perhaps most importantly, can be communicated to others. But as Firat (1985:143) points out, marketing's blind adherence to the accepted normative paradigm of natural science in terms of "accepting temporal/contextual facts and truths as universal and eternal truths" undermines its application.

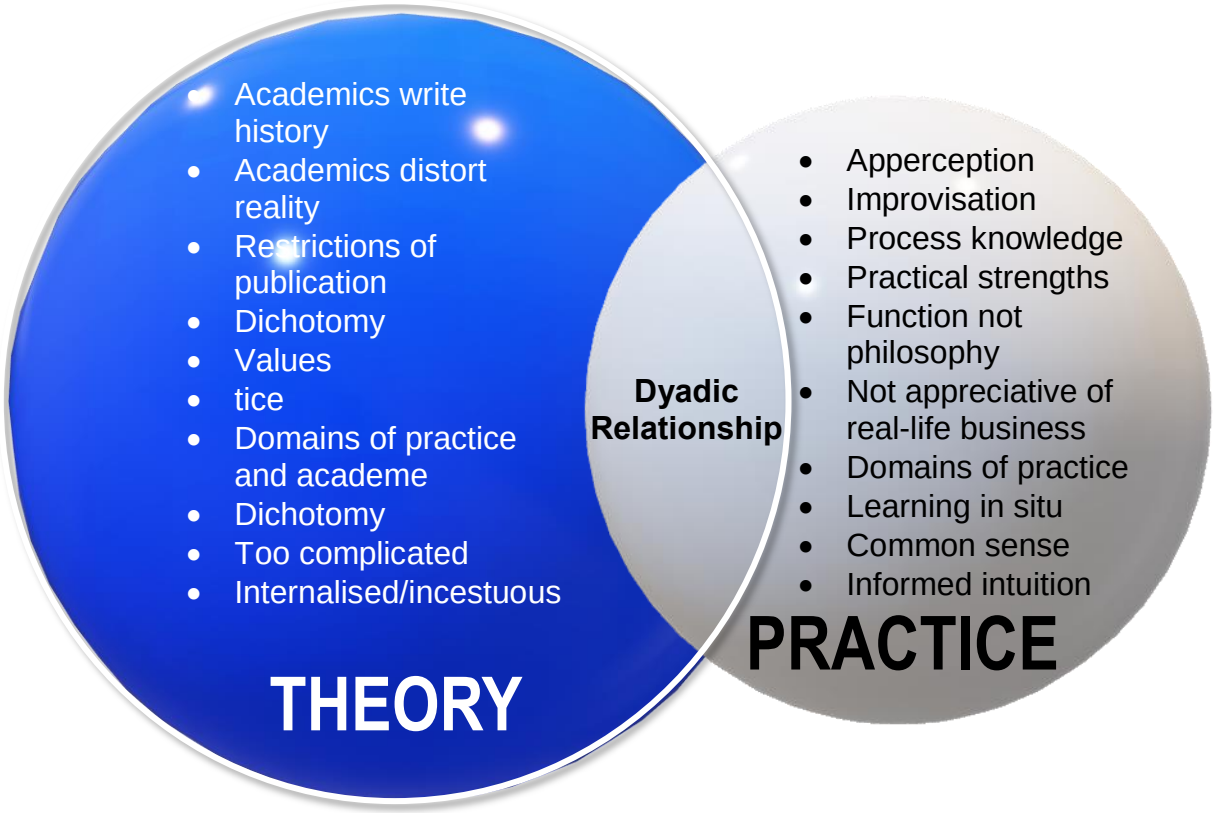
The results of this inquiry have shown evidence of the hegemony of power being with explicit marketing discourse and this not always being reflective of actual practice. An International Marketing Manager for a Global Automotive company (*GAB1*) confirms this as "*applying basic principles – relationships, positioning, branding and so on – but the numbers are smaller in the dealerships*".

Cornelissen and Lock (2005:180) suggest that "the use of marketing theory is a complex and multifaceted process, and ultimately depends upon practical assessments by practitioners concerning the currency, timeliness and relevance of a certain theory for a practical problem or situation". Using academic theories in practice can sometime be seen as lacking real-world credibility or applicability. Cornellisen (2000:357) argues that "academic knowledge can often be considered as rather abstract and conceptual in nature" with limited applicability; Pavlik and Toth (1984), on the other hand, argue that knowledge captured in academic theories can often provide a solid framework for practitioners. This is where the gold dust of marketing theory lies: the reiteration of theory in practice and the reification of practice in theory. As with the tacit experience of the practitioner given above, the process of extracted codes revealed recurring incidents of this in examples such as: theoretical, prescribed, impractical, scientific, formulaic, systems, process, applied principles and effectiveness. The evidence of institutionalised and text book teaching, often without practical reference, throws a pedagogical element explored later on. An important element of this inquiry is how these two knowledge domains connect and disconnect. This is the next theme which emerged, as discussed below.

5.2.3 **Final coding theme 3: Disconnect and power; symmetry and asymmetry**

The received wisdom is that the established relationship between marketing theory and practice is a dichotomy. Certainly, there is plenty of evidence to support a disconnect between these two epistemes. A comprehensive literature review of Knowledge Management (KM) in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) undertaken by Massaro *et al*, (2015), found fragmented and mostly unrelated research with little practical application. Brownlie *et al* (2008: 461) describe this as "positioning management practice on the one hand as romantic, but ultimately mundane and un-reflexive as habitual action; while on the other hand there is theory, the sphere of abstract knowledge, framed within the academy and characterized as dry, erudite, perhaps reflexive, but reductive and limited in scope".

Figure 5.1 Theory/Practice Relationship



Source: Author's illustration

NB: **The relative size of these 'globes' of knowledge domains are featured here for illustrative purposes only and not meant to be based on actual quantitative calculation.*

One of the themes to emerge from the data in the inquiry is '*Disconnect and Power*'. *Figure 5.1 Theory/Practice Relationship* above includes elements which support this: domains of practice and academe, academics write history and distort reality, not appreciative of real-life business, differing domains and dis-location between strategy and practice, and the dominant discourses of theory over practice. Whilst these knowledge domains are heterogeneous but overlapping spheres, any analysis of this binary 'gulf' has to acknowledge the trophic levels in between and the role and influence of intermediaries.

The asymmetrical dispersion of power and influence is shown (though it must be pointed out NOT to scale) by the disproportionate size of the 'theory' and 'practice' globes demonstrating the power skewed towards theoretical perspectives. This is illustrative and not indicative of size distribution.

This can be seen in the Head of a major international educational provider *(MEP1)* when asked about where knowledge power is located: "*Knowledge generated by the academy, academics, text books. We have to reflect what is relevant to our customers: good practice, conceptual ideas, theory. The MEP synthesise and distribute that knowledge".*

This is further illustrated by an academic *(AOM1)*: *It's that dislocation between strategy and practice. The dominant discourses. Strategy is abstract 'dead', separated. The practical world is the opposite. Your "in situ/in aspic" theme. The two worlds are separated by different logics. Practice gets a raw deal. Theorists rule the roost and have a self-appointed privilege. Because it's not scientific".*

The history of marketing thought informs the view that this lack of connection is an indictment since history started with observations of practice. Indeed, Hackley *ibid* suggests that marketing has forgotten its own history; the roots of theory formation – practice – has suffered from academic appropriation. Baker (2013:223) suggests that "the real contribution and impact of academic work in marketing should be reflected by its adoption and application in practice". Brownlie *et al* (2007:1) comment that closing the perceived gap between theory and practice assumes the proportions of "a heroic struggle between the sacred and the profane; between the abstract high-mindedness of theory and the lowly but useful deeds of practice". The 'sacred'

and the 'profane' is an interesting way to observe this dichotomy since it marks out the polarities and delineates the perceived pecking order of the theorists. Brown's (2001: 255) certainly captures this well: "If academic marketing is to move forward intellectually, if it is to attract practitioners back into the fold, if it is to transcend its current crisis of representation, if it is to enter the twenty-first century with renewed confidence, it must abandon its futile fixation with science and it must abandon it forthwith".

In the light of November's *op. cit.* reference to academic marketing knowledge *myopia,* this is an important comment in this debate. The discourse(s) between the various marketing constituencies examined sometimes are, and sometimes are not, in a dialectical relationship with each other. Even in collegiate collaboration, the tension between marketing *in situ* and marketing *in aspic* often manifests itself as a dialectical separation. Fundamentally, what is really being examined here is the power relations in the generation of knowledge, and as Jorgenson and Philips (2002:2) suggest, "the struggle between different knowledge claims could be understood and empirically explored as a struggle between different discourses which represent different ways of understanding aspects of the world and construct identities".

5.2.4 **Final coding theme 4: Hybridity and unity**

Whilst there is evidence in the data that the polarities of the theory and practice knowledge domains form a duality, there is also evidence to support the view that there is, and can be, common ground: theory and practice need not always be seen as in binary opposition but can also co-exist to mutual benefit.

It is pertinent that the Head of an international educational provider *(MEP1)* when asked whether knowledge was theoretical or practical, his answer was telling: "*Yes of course. All the latest advances in academia and all the requirements of being a marketing practitioner. Our centres deliver curricula that a) reflects our customer demand for expert tuition, and b) the 'received wisdom' from the academy".*

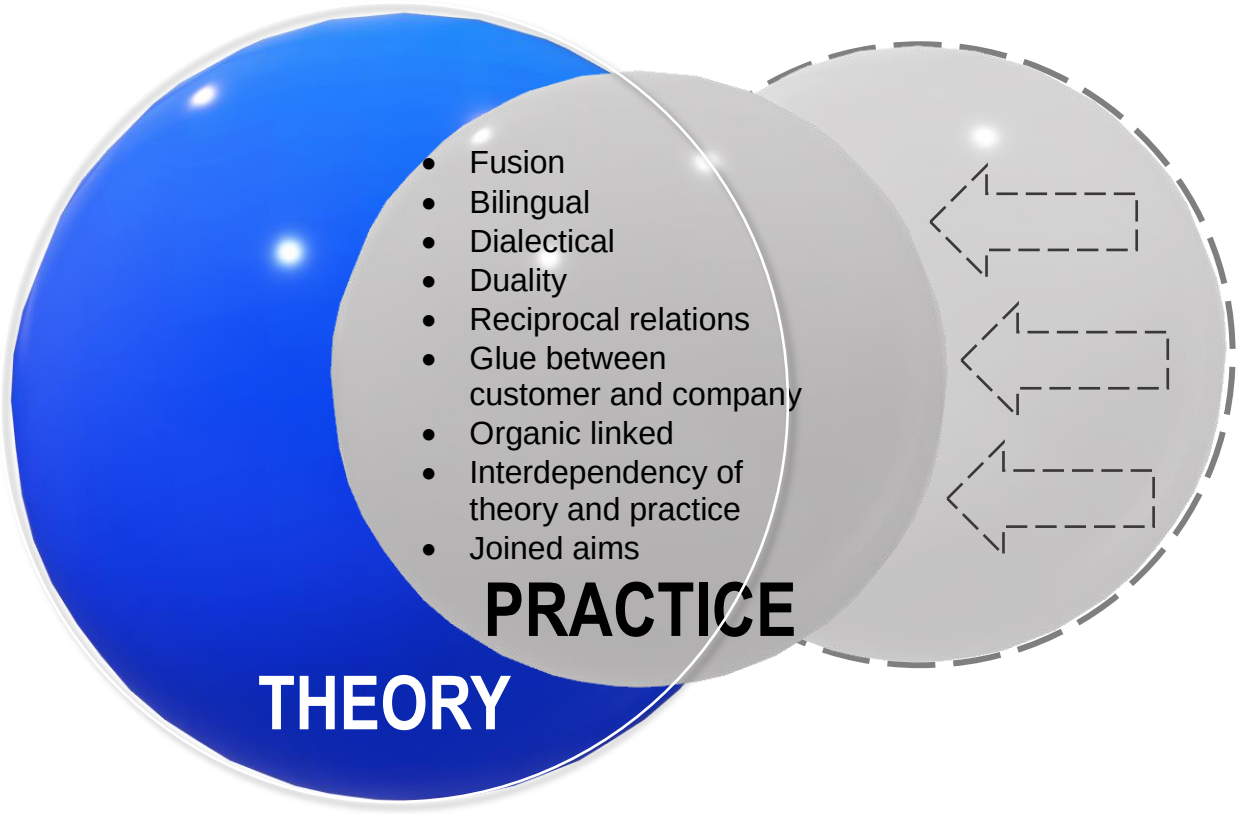
The views of Marketing Manager at an international educational provider *(MEP2)* on theory or practice-orientation: "*I think that marketing is very closely aligned with the commercial*

practice as business, marketing and sales go very closely together. If there is a synergy amongst them then there is a high probability that we produce desirable results on a consistent basis".

This echoes Wensley's (2002: 351) argument that the perceived gap between marketing academe and practice is in some ways a flawed diagnosis as well as an ineffective prescription. These discrete and often distant fields of study have intersected at various junctures and the history of marketing would be incomplete if practitioners and academics were disassociated from one another (Hollander *et al*, 2005:33). The search for a hybrid knowledge model, combining the tacit knowledge of practice with the explicit knowledge of theory, is the aim of this thesis. There is a need for polyphonic voices in marketing discourse. *Figure 8.2 Theory/Practice Fusion* below features extracts from the data showing evidence in the empirical findings in this inquiry that this dichotomy or discursive gap could be pursued as a dyadic fusion.

Some of the themes which highlight the possibility of some sort of engaged dialogue – such as fusion, bilingual, dialectical, duality, reciprocal relations, glue between customer and company, organically-linked joined aims and interdependency of theory and practice are shown in the Theory/Practice Fusion in *Figure 5.2 Theory/Practice Fusion* below where the opposing domains of theory and practice merge in joined venture and application Marketing knowledge production is often a circular perpetual movement construction demonstrating the continuous generation and consumption of marketing knowledge.

Figure 5.2 Theory/Practice Fusion



Source: Author's illustration

NB: **The relative size of these 'globes' of knowledge domains are featured here for illustrative purposes only and not meant to be based on actual quantitative calculation.*

5.2.5 **Final coding theme 5: Reiteration**

Models are often used as visual metaphors to demonstrate key elements, linkages, disconnections, causes and effects, interrelationships and so on, often linear, showing input and output, sometimes circular demonstrating movement and complexity. The nature of the interchange (sometimes collaboration between theory and practice is one of statement and re-statement of praxis: the *reiteration of theory in practice* and the *reification of practice in theory*.

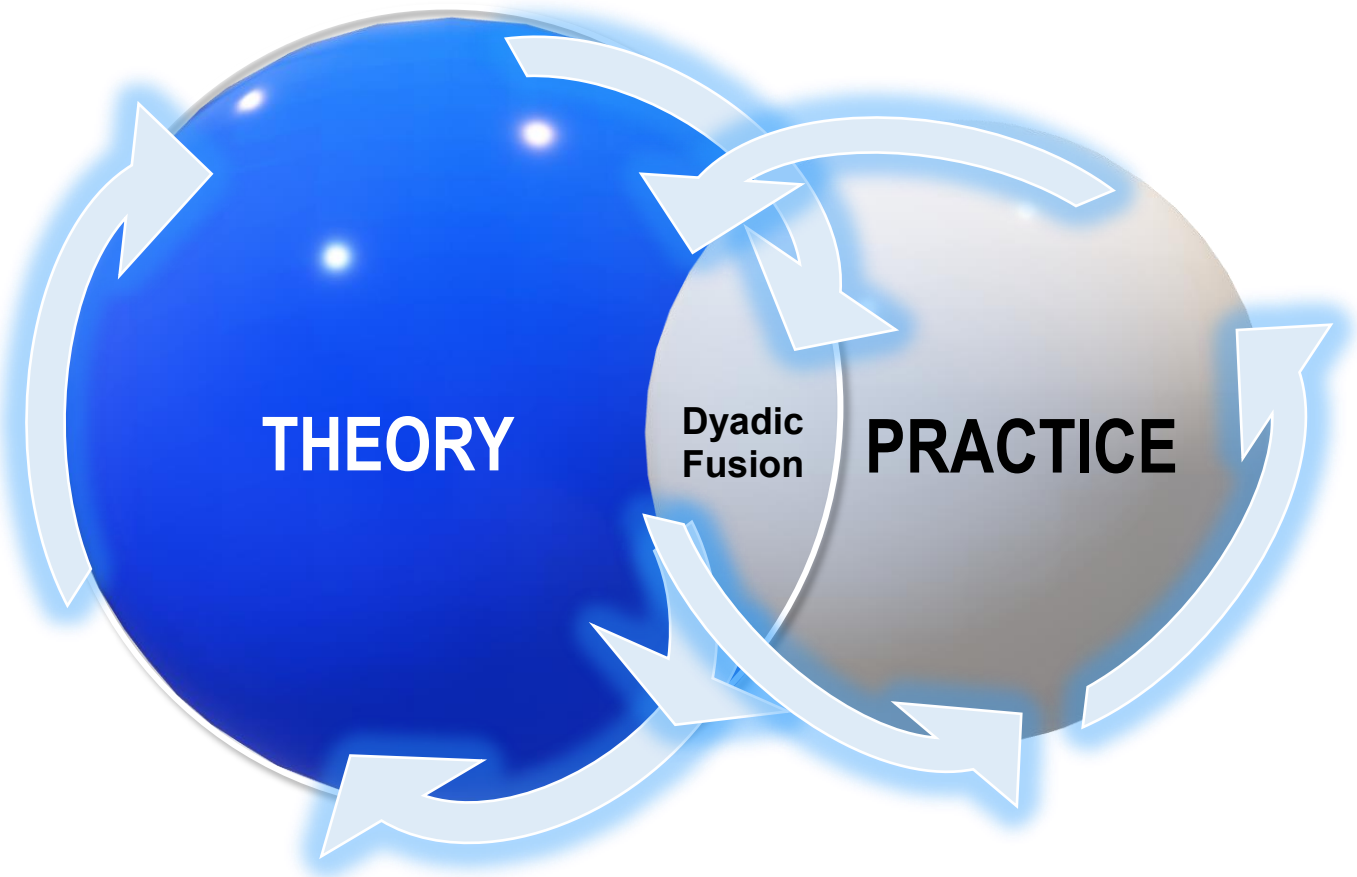
Evidence of reiteration of knowledge creation can be seen in this quote from An International Marketing Manager for a Global Automotive company (GAB1): *"The company has well-established procedures and knowledge based on Operations and Manufacturing, but we've imported marketing knowledge through graduate employment, consultative input, agency input, the executive team's skills and experience. All marketing planning is highly systemised and part of a corporate network of handed-down formulae and functional reporting. It's a sort*

of cycle: we import knowledge brought in by our Graduates who convert that theoretical formula into applicable process and then I suppose that gets regurgitated back into academia in our presentations and papers".

In previously published work, the author proposed that "the all-consuming clamour for reliance and relevance of theory to practice dictates that the form, function and philosophy of marketing must be co-created in the practical pragmatism of praxis. Praxis is practice informed by theory and theory informed by practice, a cyclical process of experiential, contextual learning" (Smith *et al*, 2015:1027).

In this model, theory and practice are not seen as linear stages. The revolving circles of textual and contextual elements, and the interaction between the two, demonstrate the lack of linearity and the key feature of regurgitation and re-creation. It is not a static process but more like a homeomorphic Möbius Strip where theory and practice are part of the same reiterative process,

Figure 5.3 Reiterative knowledge creation



Source: Author's illustration

NB * *The relative size of these 'globes' of knowledge domains are featured here for illustrative purposes only and not meant to be based on actual quantitative calculation.*

presented here as a sort of 'perpetual motion' machine with lots of individual cogs or interactions feeding into the main context to text process. Again, visualising the parts individually and then as part of a holistic picture is both hermeneutically consistent and a key aim of this research inquiry. This reinforces Gadamer's (1981) claim that the 'hermeneutic circle' of interpretation, with its iterative, ongoing examination of part and whole, whole and part, is a model of circular analysis. As has been established above, the dynamic creation, generation and dissemination of marketing knowledge is a circular, continuous, reiterative *process* (illustrated in *Figure 5.3 Reiterative knowledge creation* above) which shows how action is converted to practical theory, which then reinforces practice and recycles theoretical interpretations of practice.

Gadamer (1976:117) describes this type of circular hermeneutic and relationship with the movement of understanding as moving "constantly from the whole to the part and back to the whole". The 'translation' model suggested by Cornellisen *op. cit.* acknowledges equity between academic thought and the experiential, intuitive knowledge of the practitioner and this is apposite to this inquiry.

Here, the dynamics of the process are being investigated: whether the original source of marketing knowledge is theory or practice. This author challenges the received wisdom that these polarities are often seen as opposing epistemes when in fact they can be, as stated above, coterminous. There are overlapping similarities and boundaries and there should be acknowledgement of the fusion. The baseline for marketing knowledge is debatable. Marketing practice was 'practised' before it became to be known as 'marketing'. As discussed above in *Section 4.5*, commercial activities (aka 'marketing'), whilst formally discussed in the late 19th century, has existed prior to this. However, it took till the early 20th century for there to be any sort of formal academic perspective.

5.2.6 **Final coding theme 6: Relevance**

As can be seen from the model, the convergence of the two domains is where marketing knowledge is synthesised. This highlights the need to clarify what is meant by the 'relevance' of marketing and marketing research. And yet, the climate of accountability, sustainability and

social salience (Smith, 2010) is replacing the institutionalised fixation with a prescriptive formulaic approach; stakeholder engagement and community responsibility and the importance of research being oriented towards "publicly desirable goals" will lead to a real marriage between theory and practice suggests Knorr-Cetina (2006: 7). Similarly, Hackley and Skålén, (2011:190) argue for a "stronger focus on marketing-as-practice (MAP) in marketing which engages with critical perspectives and opens up a mutually enriching dialogue between MAP and the more established strain of practice research". Codified marketing knowledge, like any other form of practical knowledge, has a relation to professional practice which is not necessarily reflective of the cognitive style of experts within its domain (Hackley, 1999). It has been argued that closing the gap between the dominant theoretical discourse and the practical application of marketing may present a chasm of incommensurable opposites. Bridge building or creating a platform allowing a varied micro-discourse approach may offer a better alternative.

There is increasing pressure for marketing practitioners and scholars to become more accountable in terms of the impact of marketing on shareholder value; the question of relevance must be applied to theoretical marketing knowledge. The ESRC (2014) 'Pathways to Impact' policies encourage knowledge generation which is socially and politically relevant and can contribute to the 'double hurdle' of scholarly and practical impact (Pettigrew, 1997), namely academic rigour and practical relevance. More recently, (Pettigrew, 2001) acknowledged this has become over-simplified; the engagement with the world of practice and academe is plural not singular. Lee (1999:27) questions the evidence for lack of relevance: "Research on the topic of relevance to practice would need to accomplish more than just provide empirically grounded statements on the state of relevance". According to Doyle (2000:56), increasingly "intermediate outcomes are measured by non-financial measures such as attitudes and behavioural intentions", these representing the chief marketing assets of brand equity and customer equity. The perceived "lack of accountability has undermined marketing's credibility, threatened marketing's standing in the firm, and even threatened marketing's existence as a distinct capability within the firm" (Rust *et al*, 2004:76). Starke and Madan (2001) argue that the relevance gap between academics and practitioners is a transition to M2K pedagogy rather than M1K, the former with a narrow theoretical bias, the latter based on a practice orientation. A hybrid approach, where practice based-theory has equal standing to theory-based practice is certainly reflective of the findings of this inquiry. The very fact that marketing theory is

constructed and maintained by the marketing academy itself (Zwick and Cayla, 2011) maintains the two separate views of academe and practice. One possible solution is the development of 'practice theory', explanation of phenomena as it occurs in practice. Brownlie *et al* (2005:22) suggest that "relevance and being critical are qualities widely attributed to efforts that close, contest or interrogate the gap between theory and practice" in the production, distribution and consumption of knowledge. As evidenced in the findings documented *Chapter 6*, published marketing scholarship doesn't always advance marketing knowledge. It is often a representation of practice through rhetoric and a uniquely marketing lexicon and authors designed to "ground, and give credence to, their perspective" (Parker 2006:6). Mainstream marketing, as expressed through text, "has bought into an essentially anti-intellectual vision of practical theory and contributes a great deal of confusion to public, intellectual and commercial life through a view of social scientific theory which is distorted to fit the myth of practitioner-orientation" (Hackley, 2003:1327).

As Fullerton (1989:109) asserts, "Theory must specify the context(s) in which it applies and those in which it does not. Marketing theories are not necessarily universal, but rather legitimately temporal and spatial bounds. The quality of a marketing theory is not synonymous with its universality". *Section 7.3 Empirical evidence of textual marketing constituencies* below describes the experiences of a broad range of academics, text book authors, educational providers and so on whose influence is through the written word.

An established influential author (*ITBA1)* when asked about how relevant his text book was stated: *"I wanted to make it as authentic as possible to give students a taste of theory applied to an actual practical context. Because theory without context is not as real. Not as authentic. I applied the rules of strategy [theory] to the facts as I saw them applied by companies operating in that sector: distribution, margins, promotion, pricing. You know, the push through the channels and so on".*

5.2.7 **Final coding theme 7: Transfer of knowledge and marketing praxis**

According to Carlile and Rebentisch, (2003), knowledge transfer is an area of knowledge management concerned with the movement of knowledge across the boundaries created by specialised knowledge domains. Knowledge transfer and knowledge translation between situated practice and academic theory is a two-way, reiterative process linking these two epistemes. The phenomenon of exchanging expertise, experience and skills between academia

and industry is illustrated in the Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) of *SME1* cited in *Chapter 6*. This arrangement, which can give practical insights for academics and theoretical direction for practitioners, is also about *how* to transfer knowledge: it has to be contextualised; it has to be translated or 'interpreted' (Seaton, 2009). That is, transfer of knowledge has to be accompanied by *transformation* of knowledge. (Holden and von Kortzfleisch, (2004) advocate the application of 'translation theory').

It is the element of interaction which is the crucial dynamic here, since the evidence of polarisation between academe and the marketplace, theory and practice, is the essential key linkage. The school of thought which describes knowledge transfer as "unidirectional communication of knowledge between individuals, groups or organisations such that the recipient of knowledge (a) has a cognitive, (b) has the ability to apply the knowledge, or (c) applies the knowledge is only part of the process. A model based on mutuality and equality is much more productive.

Discussions with a Marketing Manager for Premier League Football Club focused on the nature of marketing knowledge:

> "*The club recruited me as a Marketing Graduate. I tried to transfer the knowledge and skills across from University, the theory and the exercises we did, my thesis which was on Retail not football but still useful I thought".*

Praxis is the contextualized reflection that may lead to action and even transformation. A praxis perspective removes the false dichotomy of theory and practice and creates instead a dynamic environment for the exchange of ideas; it is practice informed by theory and theory informed by practice. As Van Manen (1999:13) points out: "theory needs to be connected to practical, lived experiences both outside and within the classroom". It is the "synthetic product of the dialectic between theory and practice" according to Heilman (2003:274).

Examining how knowledge is transferred from context to text (and vice versa) is a growing focus for organisations. However, according to Schlegelmilch and Chini (2003:220), "there is a dearth of research on knowledge transfer in the field of marketing". Nenonen *et al* (2017) have addressed the "widening theory-praxis gap in marketing" by engaging practitioners as "active, reflective and empowered participants" producing knowledge which is relevant. According to Kohlbacher *ibid*, "the creation and transfer of marketing knowledge …through

knowledge-based approaches to marketing will become more and more crucial as determinants for corporate competitive advantage and the survival of firms".

Tacit knowledge, by its very nature experiential and opaque, is very often difficult to register and record. Bjerre and Sharma (2003:123) acknowledge that this is knowledge is 'market-specific and difficult to codify' making transfer of experiential, tacit marketing knowledge difficult. Kohlbacher *ibid* argues for a holistic view of marketing knowledge incorporating both explicit and tacit knowledge.

5.3 **Chapter review**

This chapter provided a comprehensive summary of the findings of research and the subsequent thorough discussion of data in the following *Chapters* 6, 7 and 8, and presented a synopsis the outcomes of empirical data taken from the interviews for all marketing constituencies featured in the research exercise, and providing rich qualitative evidence of the textual, contextual and pedagogical phenomena featured in this inquiry. It demonstrated how, together with extant knowledge, the findings have been amplified by the author to offer original insight into how marketing knowledge is conceived and consumed. And, finally, the chapter considered the results in relation to the aims and objectives of the inquiry.

6 *Chapter Six* Contextual perspectives: Marketing as it is practised

6.1 Outline of chapter

The essence of this inquiry is investigating the reiteration of theory in practice and the reification of practice in theory. This chapter attempts to complement and contextualise the evidence of 'marketing thought' (which is discussed at length in the next chapter *Chapter 7 Conceptual perspectives: Marketing as it is theorised*) with the practical contextualisation of marketing. It demonstrates how the marketing discipline is embedded in marketing practice and how marketing practice exists sometimes with but quite often without the structure of formal theory. Results are inferred from the empirical evidence of contextual marketing constituencies, the data captured from the personal 'lived-in' experience of practitioners.

6.2 Introduction

It is important to restate and expand on Denzin and Lincoln's (*ibid,* p.19) assertion quoted that "there are no objective observations, only observations socially situated". The continuation of that quotation is apposite to this section here where empirical evidence is discussed in detail: "...there are no objective observations, only *observations socially situated*… between observer and the observed…individuals are seldom able to give full explanations… all they can offer are *accounts*, or stories, about what they did and why…" (italics added for emphasis). This indeed is the essence of empirical evidence: "accounts, or stories about what they did and why".

Consequently, a wide range of influential participants involved in marketing knowledge formation and use was selected as representing the practical dynamics of marketing discourses and interviewed, where possible, in quasi-laboratory conditions (ie: the natural habitus usually associated with their profession or consumption of marketing knowledge).

Theory has been integrated with empirical evidence in order to best synthesise theoretical knowledge and actual practitioner experience. This is consistent with Mason's (2002:4) view that "connecting context with explanation means that qualitative research is capable of producing very well-founded cross-contextual generalities, rather than aspiring to more flimsy de-contextual versions". Integration with theory 'on the page' in narrative form is a feature of this section which is a method recommended by Fischer (2011:158): "constructing vignettes to test theoretical themes against the data" to corroborate with the experience of the practitioner.

6.3 The empirical evidence of contextual marketing constituencies

For clarity, the list of contextual research participants is listed below in *Table 6.1 List of contextual research participants including data capture method*, modified to indicate the method of data capture. The empirical evidence of marketing practice is taken from: 2 case analyses (one a 2-year longitudinal study) (*SME1* and *SME2*,); 7 face-to-face, in-depth interviews (*GAB1, PLFC1, PLFC2, AA1, AA2, IM1, DA1 and DA2*), 1 On-line interview (*IM2*) and 2 questionnaires (*PSB1* and *IC1*).

Table 6.1 Contextual research participants including data capture method

Marketing constituency	**Data capture method**	**Research label**
Independent Marketing Consultancy Group Pilot study	Open forum semi-structured involving interviews of 6 independent consultancies in Face-to-face, email and WhatsApp for a *Detailed discussion in *Section X*	IMCFG
Microbiological Manufacturer SME	Case analysis	SME1
Garden Furniture SME owner-driver	Case analysis	SME2
Global Automobile Brand	Face-to-face in-depth interview	GAB1
Premier League Football Club 1	Face-to-face in-depth interview	PLFC1
Premier League Football Club 2	Face-to-face in-depth interview	PLFC2
Advertising Agency, Leeds 1	Face-to-face in-depth interview	AA1
Independent Marketing Consultant	On-line Interview	IMC2

Retail Business Consultant	Face-to-face in-depth interview	RBC1
Public Sector Procurement and Contracting Manager	Questionnaire	PSP1
Independent Sales Consultant	Questionnaire	ISC1

For clarity, the presentation of data capture and analyses in each of the three sections has data taken from the interviews for all constituencies has been organised in the following manner:

- Precisé vignettes discussed as reflective of praxis.
- Individual summative extracted compared 'common' and 'specific' coded data. ('Common' data are that which recur frequently; 'specific' data are those peculiar to the context of the participant).
- Verbatim transcripts are available to view in the appendices.

The first two examples of evidence feature two different micro-SMEs: one involved in the manufacture and distribution of microbiological vials; one, a family business manufacturing garden furniture. This echoes Eisenhardt's (1989:534) claim that a case study is a research strategy which "focuses on understanding of the dynamics present within single settings". These two case studies allowed close observation of marketing *in practice* and was useful in capturing the hands-on testimonies of companies engaged in marketing in deed but not necessarily in name.

6.3.1 **Case Analysis: Microbiological Knowledge Transfer Partnership (SME1)**

SME 1, a UK-based Micro-biologicals micro-SME B2B manufacturer of specialist glass pharmaceutical and diagnostic vials, were part of a tri-partite Government-funded Knowledge Transfer Graduate Supervision partnership with University of Chester (UOC) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). This afforded a 2-year case analysis method which helped gain deep understanding of a phenomenon that has real-life complexities and complicated dynamics (Lewin and Johnston, 1997), allowing an excellent evaluation of a theory into practice holistic experience observing the phenomenon over a long-time period.

The most appropriate form of analysis was case analysis and semi-structured, face-to-face in-depth interviews. This allowed for extended observation *in situ* but also necessitated quality lengthy discussion of real-life complex and complicated dynamics. As Yin (1994:13) suggests, it was "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident".

Below is a summary of the emerging themes from SME1's evidence (essentially selected extracts taken from meetings with the MD as part of this scheme) which will then be expanded on and related to relevant theory.

Table 6.2 Initial transcript coding (SME1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Prescribed Formula Strategy Common sense Process Mis-understanding of marketing Knowledge transfer Expertise Commercial common sense	Systems Processes Development from marketing input Practical strengths Inherent strengths Process knowledge Market knowledge Customer knowledge Branding Hybrid Production-orientation Lack of brand ownership

The need for development from marketing input a prescribed, formulaic, strategic system and process is evidenced in SME1's need:

> **"*to develop a new marketing strategy and put in place systems and processes that can be used as a basis for future development*".**

The practice of marketing was seen as: **"*Common sense. Doing things instinctively. We don't have a blueprint or a marketing manual. We're too focused on producing our product*".**

SME1 is a production-orientated company which has a common mis-understanding of marketing exemplified in comments like:

> ***"Our business is producing product. Promotion is not as important"*, "*Well promotion is marketing isn't it? A synonym for marketing",***

Miles and Huberman's (*ibid.* p.25) definition of case analysis being "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context" is particularly pertinent to *SME1*. Production-orientation is an accepted implicit condition in their operation and philosophy.

Similarly, the depiction of life as 'The way it is' is evident in comments such as:

> **"*Relationship with our customers is mainly through local agents in the field who have a portfolio of products and sell, on our behalf, to companies who use our products as part of their own offer".***

The lack of brand ownership (a common failing of small B2B companies remote from the end market) and 'transfer of marketing' to others can be seen in:

> ***"We are in the position where our product is part of somebody else's portfolio or offer. People buy their brand not ours*".**

Knowledge is seen as a cost and from an instrumental perspective:

> **"*Well, there's our knowledge as scientists. That's the main source of what we do. Then there's the knowledge of process, of customers, the knowledge our customers have. We pay for that in terms of discount. Access to market*".**

The application of 'marketing' was seen as trial and error, intuitive and commercial common sense:

> **"*Common sense stuff. If I'm being honest, we copy our competitors. We have used agencies, but mainly it's trying what I'd call commercial common sense and reviewing as we go*".**

6.3.2 **Case Analysis: Family-owned Garden Furniture Manufacturer (SME2)**

Polyani expressed a view that all explicit human knowledge is mainly informed by knowledge acquired cumulatively through experience. This is tacit knowledge: frequently unstated; intuitive; learned from experience; situational. A good example of this, is *SME 2* a family-run *Garden Furniture Manufacturer*. *SME 2* make product for garden centres and have a limited on-line presence. They have established a good name for quality and reliability. One of the directors, son of the owners, was interviewed as being university-educated but also a practising member of the *SME2* management team.

A summary of the emerging themes from SME2's evidence (taken from meetings with one of the directors), augmented and related to relevant theory is presented below.

Table 6.3 Initial transcript coding (SME2)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Community of practice Situated learning Praxis Communal action Tacit apperception Customer-orientation Theoretical knowledge Prescribed Formulaic Strategy	Informed intuition Family firm 'custom and practice' Handed down knowledge Learning by doing Instinctive Inherent Daily tasks

The view of 'marketing' was:

> **"*My parent's business placed me in a position whereby I (and everyone else) was 'marketing' without actually realising it! Learning in this way captures what must be done and needs to be done in business. If you are to meet and exceed your customer's expectations and desires so that they want to return, enabling the business to remain competitive. Learning from my business idols (my Mum and Dad) was second to***

***none and what had to be done to gain and retain our customers became an inherent part of everyday duties*".**

This is reminiscent of what Quinn *et al* (2007:440) describe as "aspects of marketing management practice which are anchored in intuition, part of a broader complex social environment and reach beyond narrow theoretical prescriptions and generalisations".

Marketing is essentially:

"*Providing practitioners with a guide for strategy. Informing commercial practice".*

Knowledge was very much about family firm improvisation and 'custom and practice:

"*handed down as well as made up on the spot when trying to work out the best option for production and how to get satisfied customers. Very much hand-me-down in a sort of family knowledge way".*

Again, the evidence of tacit knowledge – informed intuition – is evident in this learned behaviour, acquired without much reference to theory.

Knowledge has:

"always been inside the company. When it comes to family firms, most I would say have a sort of intuitive knowledge that they pass on without a formalised, written agreement or modus operandi. Especially in marketing. Other areas like production, finance etc. are very much process-driven by marketing knowledge is a sort of given, common sense thing. New knowledge – like customer records, deliveries etc. are not really co-ordinated. We don't have a marketing plan as such, but I suppose we have used some of my knowledge from outside".

The nature of informed intuition and tacit knowledge is echoed in Ardley's *op. cit.* evidence of practitioners who "...have a gut feel for what is going to work and what isn't going to work".

Evidence of situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991), praxis and communal action encapsulated in:

> ***"Having been raised in a family business environment, the importance of marketing as a concept was introduced to me at an early age. In-house and external promotion, merchandising, attraction of customers and the understanding of buyer behaviour soon became the 'norm' when operating in our business environment".***

Asked about formal marketing input:

> **"*None really. I studied business of which there was elements of basic marketing. The marketing mix (7ps) was used. I have used the logics but it sort of overlays our exiting practices like customer policies, promotion, merchandising, but not any real understanding of how the customers behave. As a lecturer, I was asked to deliver some CIM sessions at Deeside College. Similarly, teaching short courses like 'Starting your new Business' required a marketing input such as exploring marketing objectives and strategies. I actually used some of this in my marketing plan for SME2*".**

This shows tacit apperception, previous knowledge forming a framework for new prescribed, formulaic knowledge.

Informed intuition rather than applied theory is prevalent:

> ***"I believe in business it is easy to become 'conditioned' to what one considers that marketing (sic) is actually all about. Learning by 'doing' rather than emphasising a purely theoretical stance appears to reap rewards in real business. Although, I am also a believer in carefully examining the views, opinions and theories put forward by others and will use tools and techniques accordingly as well".***

The case analyses of *SME1* and *SME2* above are good examples of the sort of implicit learning where acquired knowledge consists of both "what must be done" (experiential perception) as well as retrospective cumulative learning which "became an inherent part of everyday duties" (tacit apperception): interpreting the contingent constraints of the operating milieu set in historical context. This is interesting as it almost perfectly mirrors Alvesson's (1998:972) observation that "doing the job is reported to call for intuition and feeling rather than linear

marketing models". And yet, the need for an 'advantage' to match competitors with a 'fuller marketing package' exposes an anti-academic and perhaps ignorance of marketing. The key phrases of "became an inherent part of our everyday lives" and "became the norm when operating in our business environment" in the SME2 case resonate with the notion of tacit apperception, an intuitive (but ironically *learned* phenomenon) kind of 'knowledge capital' implicit in the community of practice behavioural characteristics of situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

6.3.3 **In-depth interview: Global Automobile Brand Marketing Manager (GAB1)**

GAB1 is a Marketing Manager for a global automobile brand who entered the workplace as a Marketing Graduate. His remit is the analysis and implementation of global marketing strategy for the UK. Whilst this is a world-wide co-ordinated strategy, designed by HQ, he has some level of regional autonomy with regard to dealer campaigns and application of localised data.

Below is a summary of the emerging themes from GAB1's evidence which is then discussed on and related to relevant theory.

Table 6.4 Initial transcript coding (GAB1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Marketplace dynamics Framework Strategy Prescribed Plan Branding Distribution Consumer Marketing-orientation Marketing input Applied principles	Glue between customer and company B2B Daily tasks Blueprint Integration Interpretation Common sense methods Marketplace dynamics Bi-lingual Integration Interpreting marketing knowledge Hybrid Theory and practice Internal processes Handed down knowledge

Formally educated and trained in marketing, he describes marketing as:

> **"*Basically the glue between us [company] and the customer. Of course, XXX has many customers. My jurisdiction is UK Dealers. But we see B2B as very similar to consumer markets".***

B2B Marketing is:

> **"*applying basic principles – relationships, positioning, branding and so on – but the numbers are smaller in the dealerships*".**

When asked whether knowledge was applying a formula or some form of inbuilt XXX company knowledge system:

> **"*That's an interesting question. It's a mixture I think. I've come from University with my bag full of marketing knowledge and tried to apply it to the objectives of the dealership dynamics. But there are data and market and customer stats which set the framework and we apply an integrated campaign which is both strategic and tactical. It's very targeted".***

His interpretation of marketing knowledge was:

> **"*A taken-for-granted approach – relationship building, positioning, branding etc. – but the variable is often the market place and that sort of conditions the application of it".***

As regards orientation (theory or practice), the reply was telling:

> **"*Neither really. I'm a hybrid. We do apply research and obviously have to know our 'theory' but we have to be steeped in the dynamics of our customer's environment. Yes, I'd say it's a hybrid role. Hybrid between sales [business development] and marketing as well".***
>
> ***"The company has well-established procedures and knowledge based on Operations and Manufacturing, but we've imported marketing knowledge through graduate employment, consultative input, agency input, the executive***

team's skills and experience. All marketing planning is highly systemised and part of a corporate network of handed-down formulae and functional reporting".

The self-labelling of *GAB1* as a "hybrid" is interesting. It is recorded here as a specific code related to the specific company and yet reflects an increasing trend of marketing-educated practitioners.

6.3.4 In-depth interview: Independent Marketing Consultant 2 (IMC2)

IMC2 is a very successful independent marketing consultant with a top-class pedigree of building and owning companies and now offers financial and marketing advice to a range of blue-chip companies and SMEs.

The emerging themes from several interviews were:

Table 6.5 Initial transcript coding (IMC2)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Applied principles Customer-orientation Communications Customer knowledge Integrated marketing communications Marketing-oriented Product and service Planning System Customer-oriented Dichotomy between theory and practice Dichotomy between marketing and sales	Intuition Difficulties with not having formal marketing education Value Sales-orientation Effectiveness Interpreting marketing knowledge Bi-lingual Learning through observation Informal learning Processes Handed down knowledge Daily tasks Intuition External exposure Practical knowledge Recording action Forecasting guesswork Practical experience Values

IMC2 had:

> ***"No formal education in marketing ... informal learning mainly through observation of others (including competitors) and rigorous record" and I'm speaking from a perspective built out of personal experience and intuition rather than theoretical or academic studies".***

Marketing experience is:

> ***"marketing experience is almost entirely practical rather than theoretical. In the course of my career I have met, managed and employed many theorists but on a personal level relied to a large extent on intuition"***
>
> but his practical marketing experience came from:
>
> ***"selling investment funds to institutional investors in the UK… so the practical exposure was every single aspect idea creation, branding, writing, production, distribution, analysis of marketing effectiveness etc"***.

IMC2 believes that:

> ***"The purpose of marketing is to deliver through every piece of external communications with all stakeholders the core values of the business. Marketing created and used effectively provides great clarity to the product and service offered, plus through the use of analytics great information on the effectiveness of the company's communication, the needs of the client base and the state of the competition/market place".***

As a financial expert, IMC2 has a high level of practical marketing knowledge acquired through exposure of marketing experts and situations involving marketing. He is not untypical of practitioners who have accumulated knowledge not necessarily through formal education.

6.3.5 **In-depth interview: PL Football Club Marketing Manager (PLFC1)**

PLFC1 is a Marketing Manager for a Premier League Football who entered the workplace as a Marketing Graduate. Her remit is the recruitment and development of

Junior Cubs (not the real name) in all aspects of communications, as well as providing support to the Commercial Director.

Table 6.6 Initial transcript coding (PLFC1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Marketing mix Strategy Promotion Relationships Targeting Marketing knowledge Theoretical knowledge	Practical objectives Knowledge transfer Applied and practical Practice over theory Not applicable to real-life business Following market practice Intuitive Some of it not practical

With formal Marketing qualifications, PLFC1 describes 'marketing' as:

> *"**Tools. Tools to apply to our customer base. Used to achieve objectives"*** but also as **"*intuitive".***

Objectives are:

> **"*Fan relations. We have to get so many season ticket sales through our promotions, get our name linked with local charities, look after our juniors (we recruit our fans of the future from our Juniors club. We promote against local rivals but it's mainly to build up relationships with the target locals".***

Knowledge was referred to as:

> **"*The club recruited me as a Marketing Graduate. I tried to transfer the knowledge and skills across from University, the theory and the exercises we did, my thesis which was on Retail not football but still useful I thought".***

Transferring of knowledge is a common characteristic of Marketing graduates. *PLFC1* inferred there was a formula which gets transferred.

When asked how useful theoretical knowledge was, PLFC1 answered:

"This is a very male-dominated club. In fact, the whole industry is. I feel that putting my presentations into a theoretical marketing framework …… you know the language, words of marketing…. the phrase like positioning, segmentation, customer relationships…… they get ignored. Some of it seen as not practical. It's just the 'bottom line' that's used".

6.3.6 In-depth interview: PL Football Club Communications Director (PLFC2)

PLFC2 is a Communications Director for a Premier League Football who entered the workplace as a junior journalist on a local paper. His remit is to represent the club image in all media and maintain engagement with the fanbase. Started as a Press Relations Officer without any marketing qualifications.

Table 6.7 Initial transcript coding (PLFC2)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Communication	Misunderstanding about marketing Following market practice Hybrid Theory and practice

The main importance of Marketing is seen as:

"surely communications. To stay in touch with the supporters as a friend as much a club official is what I think it is about".

Marketing is really:

"the commercial aspects and communication bit. Like PR. Dealings with the media. Digital communications. Match day events. Programmes. Arranging interviews with players. Charity work".

Knowledge:

"used to be practice. Since digital and Sky, we've imported a lot of practice and specialist skills".

PLFC2 is typical of personnel who progress from local press without sufficient understanding of the holistic aspects of marketing and dependent upon 'old school' contacts and relationships rather than a modern marketing skill set. A lack of awareness of anything other than 'promotion' was clearly evident. The 'old ways' appear to be still present in some parts of the Premier League but, increasingly, more formal application of marketing theory (as opposed to just sector knowledge) is becoming a normative practice.

*Updated data. This position has since been filled by a Communications expert with a much more strategic appreciation of brand development and rounded approach to marketing. Conversations with this new appointee have confirmed the sea-change from a basically amateurish phenomenon.

6.3.7 **In-depth interview: Retail Business Consultant (RBC1)**

RBC1 runs his own Consultancy business with a focus on Category Management Best Practice. Previously Retail Marketing professional at Boots UK over 33 years. Although an Executive MBA, has only some formal' training in Marketing.

Table 6.8 Initial transcript coding (RBC1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Scientific Theoretical Customer knowledge Formal marketing education Formula of marketing analysis and application Customer knowledge Market knowledge Strategic issues	Sector expertise Category management Tutoring Learning through observation Informal learning Processes Handed down knowledge Daily tasks Recording action Practical application Disseminator of knowledge Practical orientation

	Managing / channelling expertise Formal training Practical Hybrid Theory and practice Balance Coach Market dynamics Planning Fairness Disconnect with customer and business Marketplace dynamics Practical Real life Hard-nosed business economics Questioning practice

RBC1 claims that:

> **"*marketing theory has been picked up over my career on various training courses, some of it very theoretical, some of it more related to the work we have been doing at any given time".***

Whilst he works with

> "***with SMEs to improve their Marketing skills",***

his orientation is clearly is

> ***"to do this with them in an entirely practical rather than academic way"***.

He admits to

> **"*I'm not sure I really knew what Marketing was right up to the point of joining Boots straight from Uni. I didn't have any kind of epiphany in my teens or whilst at Uni that said: "Marketing is the career for you mate". …… it was sleeves-rolled-up, practical getting on with stuff, under a thinly disguised banner of 'Retail Marketing'.***

An interesting comment about disseminating marketing knowledge:

> **"*My focus as I climbed the career ladder has been to impart what knowledge I have in as practical a way as possible. I don't talk in a theoretical way, but I'm not stranger to doing and espousing 2x2 matrices or graphs with axes of time vs change, to map brands etc.".***

When asked "How do you see your contribution to the field?", *RBC1* answered very honestly:

> **"*Desperately trying to be practical. When working on Growth 100 at the Uni of Nottingham recently, I had to balance the needs of the University who approached things from an academic perspective, with the needs of the Companies attending who wanted the theory to be turned in to something more practical that they could use immediately. In that sense, what has happened now is that I see myself more as a coach then as a detailed practitioner".***

RBC1 is a good example of a hybrid: a practitioner with theoretical underpinning.

6.3.8 In-depth interview: Advertising Agency Account Director (AA1)

AA1 is an Account Director for a Leeds advertising agency who entered the profession (and still practises) without marketing qualifications.

Table 6.9 Initial transcript coding (AA1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Customer-orientation	Misunderstanding about marketing Function not philosophy

He who describes the marketing function in his West Yorkshire Advertising Agency as:

"*As part of commercial. Part of all pitches have to be market-oriented. Analysis. Market stats. Customer targeting information. Competition"* and "*Customer focus. It is used to support creative".*

When asked whether 'creative' is part of communications which is part of marketing, the answer:

"*Yes, but we're organised in functional divisions: accounts, sales, creative, media, marketing, production"* described marketing as function not philosophy.

6.3.9 Questionnaire: Public Sector Procurement and Contracting Manager (PSP1)

PSP1 has formal marketing qualifications, has been involved in Public Sector procurement and contracting for 20 years, and **"*established new businesses, both* with exposure to *marketing strategies"***. Below is the essence of the emerging codes taken from an extended interview.

Table 6.10 Initial transcript coding (PSP1)

Common codes	Specific codes
Consumer-oriented Theory User Subjected to more formal forms of marketing Theoretical knowledge Prescribed Formulaic Strategy IMC Branding Positioning Consumer	Market engagement Communications Formal marketing education Practice User Values Branding Loyalty Innate business marketing skills Prescribed Formula Customer base expansion Strategy Developing markets Developing customers Applied theory to practice Subject matter expertise

Innate marketing skills evidenced:

> **"*My current role in creating marketing knowledge is focused within my own company where I take a lead with my colleagues to develop content and materials that are used to help promote and position my company within the market we operate within… I use my knowledge to help develop the content (see below) and also coach and mentor colleagues within the business to develop and broaden their marketing skills".***

PSP1 claims that the purpose of marketing is:

> **"*informing commercial practice" and the "definition of marketing (particularly the final 2 P's of marketing) are aligned to my personal values".***

6.3.10 Questionnaire: Independent Sales Consultant (ISC1)

ISC1 is an independent sales consultant with a background of almost pure sales-orientation, without any marketing qualifications, who has applied marketing principles without any real reference to marketing theory. Business acumen has been acquired without any formal education and forged in the practice of sales.

Table 6.11 Initial transcript coding (SC1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Product-orientation Target marketing Market-orientation Market needs	Applying theory to practice Misunderstanding of marketing Real world Consultancy Misunderstanding of marketing Intuition Practical experience and knowledge Responsibility without knowledge Practice-informed knowledge

6.3.11 **Note on coding procedures and summary of data themes**

The extracts above have been presented in the form of 'concepts' and 'categories' which have emerged from the interview data. This first level of coding ('open coding') have been split into:

- 'common' codes which are concepts occurring regularly in more than one transcript; and

- 'specific' codes which are peculiar to the participant's specific context.

Here the *text* of the transcripts has been the focus and then a re-reading of the emerging codes (ie: 'axial coding') has been used to reinforce original interpretation of the interviews and transcripts. This has been a reiterative, double-check process to ensure overriding themes have been identified. Emerging themes extracted from the initial coding of transcripts in this section have been collated with those from *Chapter 7* and *8* and were previously presented in summative form in *Table 4.1 Initial emerging and final coding themes summary s* in Section 4.4 above. Whilst *Table 4.1* is a summative representation of all the emerging codes, some were applicable to only some constituents (eg: tacit knowledge only applied to practitioners), and some were common to all (eg: the problems of transferring knowledge).

6.3.12 **Tacit knowledge and practice analysis**

The most prominent factor which concerned the theory/practice duality which emerged from the data was tacit knowledge. Informed intuition (often counter-intuitive), established in the vacuum of historical practice, had an unshakable hold on the application of marketing.

Tacit knowledge does not arise only from the implicit acquisition of knowledge but also from the implicit processing of knowledge. When discourse occurs in a micro-context, tacit knowledge – situational learning - can be insular and unrecorded. This is evidenced above in SME2's view that intuitive knowledge had "***always been inside the company… very much hand-me-down in a sort of family knowledge way".***

As Saren and Brownlie (2004:7) suggest, the partly intuitive world of the practitioner whose "immanent and insistent experience and knowledge cannot be given expression through the received concepts and language of marketing", is often not expressed in text.

The author has used immanent critique (which can help ground the normative claims of discourse), to gain an insider perspective on practitioner tacit knowledge. Immanent, in this sense, refers to the practice and beliefs which typify the experience of a group of participants located in a context in a specific society.

It is an internal perspective, and to be internally consistent, evidence must be grounded in the experience of the participants. Eraut (2004) suggests that tacit knowledge exists in three forms:

- Situational understanding rooted in experience *(eg: "Learning by 'doing' rather than emphasising a purely theoretical stance appears to reap rewards in real business" from Garden Furniture Manufacturer SME2).*

- Automatised, routinised procedures (eg: The "*knowledge as scientists… the knowledge of process" from Microbiological Manufacturer SME1).*

  the rules embedded in intuitive decision-making (eg: The fact that *"marketing experience is almost entirely practical rather than theoretical. In the course of my career I have met, managed and employed many theorists but on a personal level relied to a large extent on intuition"* as evidenced by Independent Marketing Consultant *IMC2*).

The process of coding extracted recurring incidents of this in examples such as: apperception, improvisation, learning in situ, common sense, informed intuition, inherent, learning by doing and through observation, situated learning, innate business/marketing skills and handed down knowledge. Whilst this is evident in a lot of the interviews with practitioners, there is an interesting point from the data of *the inconsistency of practice*. Because of the 'internal' (often isolated) nature of the practitioner, horizons can be, therefore, internalised. Amongst the wide spread of practitioners interviewed, their experience is in contexts where traditional marketing theory often has little impact. There is a discernible gap between what is said and what is practised.

6.4 **Chapter review**

In this chapter, the first of a trilogy of chapters forming the integrated analysis of findings, results from empirical research on the practical contextualisation of marketing was examined, describing how the marketing discipline is embedded in marketing practice. As has been

posited above, what happens first in the marketplace advances theory as much as theory tries to explain and predict phenomena. Here, in *Chapter 5*, the phenomenological experience of a wide range of marketing constituencies was presented in the form of vignettes and analysis. Themes were extracted, coded and synthesised to form a rich picture from the qualitative data. A discussion on the nature of tacit knowledge, constituent habitus and professional marketing practice accompanied a range of empirical data collected from observation and the personal experiential testimonies of a broad reach of marketing constituencies.

In the overall quest to examine and determine what constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice, this chapter is critically important in understanding the epistemology and values of tacit knowledge which is based on the evidence of experience, with or without the input of theory. It helps prepare for the next part of the discussion – the theoretical perspective of marketing knowledge - and starts to examine and critically analyse perceived and actual disconnects between these two epistemes.

7 *Chapter Seven* **Conceptual perspectives: Marketing as it is theorised**

7.1 Outline of chapter

The previous chapter, *Chapter 6 Contextual perspectives: Marketing as it is practised*, was about how marketing is practised in dynamic, competitive marketplaces. This next section is about how marketing is presented and represented in the written word, scrutinising what is accepted and challenged as published normative marketing theory. It examines some of the different perspectives of 'what marketing is', reflected in the thoughts and theories of leading authors, academics, the wider academy and the author's own contributions to the development of published marketing theory. The content is partly in the form of first-hand evidence of these differing marketing constituencies juxtaposed with relevant published marketing theory.

7.2 Introduction

What should academics be focusing on in terms of the production of marketing knowledge? Grønhaug (2002), for example, claims that 'useful' marketing knowledge is often associated with knowledge resulting in recommendations for action: instrumental knowledge use. *Instrumental knowledge use* is the key for Ardley (2011:628) too who points out that: "consistently failing to provide us with adequate insights into the world of the marketing manager… [and] routinely ignores the diversity of individual action and meaning creation in organisations". This is echoed in November's (2004:1) suggestion that marketing practitioners neither subscribe to nor read academic marketing journals arguing that "in its present state, academic marketing research should be ignored by marketing practitioners".

7.3 The empirical evidence of textual marketing constituencies

To complement the evidence of marketing practice (which was discussed previously at length in *Chapter 6*), a wide range of influential participants involved in marketing knowledge formation and use was selected as representing the main theoretical marketing discourses and interviewed, where possible, in quasi-laboratory conditions (ie: the natural habitus usually associated with their profession or consumption of marketing knowledge). Similar to that already discussed, experiential evidence has been integrated with theory in order to best synthesise theoretical knowledge and actual practitioner experience, whether this corroborates or contradicts.

For clarity, the list of textual research participants is listed below in *Table 7.1 Textual research participants including data capture method*, modified to indicate the method of data capture. The empirical evidence of marketing practice is taken from 1 case analysis (MEP1-6), 2 in-depth face-to-face interviews (MEP 7 and AOMSIG1), 4 groups of face-to-face interviews (AOM2, AOMB1-6, BL1-6 and IA1) and 3 online interviews (AOM1, AI2 and AI3).

For clarity, the presentation of data capture and analyses in each of the three sections has data taken from the interviews for all constituencies has been organised in the following manner:

- Precisé vignettes discussed as reflective of praxis.
- Individual summative extracted compared 'common' and 'specific' coded data. ('Common' data are that which recur frequently; 'specific' data are those peculiar to the context of the participant).
- Verbatim transcripts are available to view in the appendices.

In addition, a comprehensive final coding summary is presented in *Chapter 9 Interpretations and contribution to knowledge* as part of the analysis and interpretation of all data.

Table 7.1 Textual research participants by data capture method

Marketing constituency	**Data capture method**	**Research label**
AOM Academic Group Pilot study	Open forum semi-structured informal focus group involving 4 AOM academics via SIG workshop and 3 individual academic discussions	AOMPG
Influential Academic Author	Interview	IAA1
Marketing Education Provider (MEP) Head	In-depth face-to-face interview	MEP1

Marketing Education Provider (MEP) Marketing Manager	In-depth face-to-face interview	MEP2
Marketing Education Provider (MEP) Technical Curriculum Development Group	Case analysis	MEP 3-6
Academic in knowledge discussion and production at AOM conferences	Face-to-face interview	AOM2
AOM Communications Special Interest Group (SIG), at various conferences and workshops	In-depth face-to-face interview	AOMSIG1
Academics at AOM at Branding Conference Cambridge	Face-to-face interview	AOMB1-6
Authors in workshop pre-launch for book launch	Face-to-face interviews	BL1-6

Source: Author's illustration

7.3.1 **Online interview: Influential Academic Author (IAA1)**

This author is an elite academic and has an enviable track record of contrarian conceptual thinking and bravura keynote displays of innovative opinions. His contribution to the academy debate is matched by his virtuoso writing.

Table 7.2 Initial transcript coding (IAA1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Theoretical Consumer-orientation Scholarly research Knowledge not from family	Hybrid Theory as applied to practice Marketing as a philosophy Publication

IAA1 migrated from marketing consultancy:

"Purely by chance, … came across a book on Consumer Behaviour while browsing in the library (Engel, Kollat and Blackwell) … and was blown away… wanted to spend his life studying consumers, marketing, retailing etc".

Why marketing?

"I can't really explain it. I have no family background in "commerce".

"The postmodern literature had a big impact on me. They were writing about marketing matters (ads, department stores, brands, etc) but in a way that was vastly different from the academic marketing scholarship that then prevailed. I'd always struggled to write in the accepted academic manner and reading Baudrillard et al was a revelation. There is an alternative!"

His biggest turning point came when:

"getting a lectureship coinciding with the XXX Polytechnic being made a "proper" university. They were looking for someone likely to publish scholarly research and I was that person. I cranked out a lot of papers on retailing and, as a result of my interest in theory …".

When asked to define the purpose of marketing, *IAA1* replied:

"*Basically, I teach, I research, I hope that someone somewhere will get something useful from it. I don't think in terms of "purpose". I think in terms of "publish".*

Whilst it is honest, that statement underlines the insularity of theoretical marketers.

7.3.2 **Head of Marketing Education Provider (MEP1)**

MEP1 is Head of Marketing Education Provider supplying marketing curricula and qualifications from national delivery centres.

Table 7.3 Initial transcript coding (MEP1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Theoretical Practice Hybrid Synthesise Customer-orientation Customers Training Formal marketing education Formal explicit	Distributors of knowledge Practitioner-oriented Expertise Tuition Received wisdom Practical expertise Need theory Bi-lingual Translators Hybrid Practice Lack of formal marketing education

This participant claims that MEP is:

> **"*are really distributors of knowledge"* meaning that they "*don't produce knowledge but distribute it".***

When asked about whose knowledge this was referring to, MEP1 claimed that it was:

> **"*Knowledge generated by the academy, academics, text books. We have to reflect what is relevant to our customers: good practice, conceptual ideas, theory. The MEP synthesise and distribute that knowledge".***

Was this theoretical or practical knowledge?

> **"*Yes of course. All the latest advances in academia and all the requirements of being a marketing practitioner. Our centres deliver curricula that a) reflects our customer demand for expert tuition, and b) the 'received wisdom' from the academy".***

MEP's customer base consists of:

> ***"Independent students, company-sponsored individuals who come from all shades of industry and commerce. They are often individuals who want to advance or companies who want a kind of market-place training".*** Training is defined as ***"They have practical expertise. They need theory".***

Lecturers are:

> ***"often practitioners who can speak the language of the practitioner but have some measure of theoretical knowledge"***, described as ***"ambidextrous"*** *('bi-lingual')* ***as you have to translate theory into practice and vice versa".***

7.3.3 Online Interview: MEP2 Marketing Manager (MEP2)

MEP2 is Marketing Manager for UK provider of marketing education. Starting with a role in Sales and Marketing Communications role supporting the sales force, she has an extensive range of qualifications.

Table 7.4 Initial transcript coding (*MEP*2)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Sales-orientation Prescribed Formal marketing training Customer-orientation Formula Prescribed Education Objectives Theoretical induction	Practice knowledge Induction of departmental synergy Latterly theoretically inclined Qualifications Trade Commercial practice Values Dissemination of marketing knowledge Applied marketing Disseminating marketing knowledge On-the-job training

In her own words:

> **"*exposure to real business in combination with academic studies helped me to understand application of marketing in real life".***

In her role at MEP she:

> **"*always tries to keep up with latest trends, especially trends in technology and digital marketing in the last few years… a number of trainings and courses aimed at marketing… I find that an on the job training is the best way to understand marketing in depth and keep up with latest trends".***

Contribution in the field of marketing knowledge is:

> **"*helping companies I work for to achieve their marketing and also corporate objectives. I am responsible for the product development in the area of marketing qualifications. I contribute to marketing through creating new marketing qualification products for the global market".***

Views on theory or practice-orientation:

> **"*I think that marketing is very closely aligned with the commercial practice as business, marketing and sales go very closely together. If there is a synergy amongst them then there is a high probability that we produce desirable results on a consistent basis".***

7.3.4 Focus group: MEP Technical Curriculum Development Team (MEP3-6)

The following is an amalgam of a MEP Technical Curriculum Development Team workshop for analysing the future direction and content of the MEP's PG curricula in which the author participated, and a subsequent extended focus group on marketing knowledge. Findings are from an employer survey (together with focus group discussion) and are presented in the form of a précis of pertinent content of those sessions (ie: relevant to the aims of this inquiry) with confidential and MEP-specific answers being redacted. This shows how marketing theory and practitioner requirements are reflected in distribution of knowledge.

Table 7.5 Initial transcript coding (MEP3-6)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Marketing skills required: *Soft skills. Collaboration. Keeping up with trends. Improve ROI. Financial skills, people management, critical thinking, analytical skills. Relationship marketing; analysis, planning, control; data; classical marketing skills; digital. Strategy. Writing; leading teams; communication.* *Vision, insight, direction. Business credibility. Marketing theory. Marketing knowledge.*	Practical marketing skills Theory and practice Formulaic General skills 'Classical' marketing Communications Credibility
What sort of knowledge do you need at senior marketing level? *Digital. Content marketing. Networking. Marketing methodology not necessarily detail. Strategy. Branding Resources. Social media. Channels. SEO, PPC.* *Knowledge of digital marketing is very important for control. Connectivity. Tools.*	Practical marketing skills Theory and practice Formulaic General skills 'Classical' marketing Communications
Management focus at PG level? *Needs overview. How marketing fits into business and practice. "Tailor your language to the different functions and KPIs. Management base. Grounding in marketing strategy. Marketers need to drive organisational change. Influence. "No longer about a marketing department but the wider managing of people, functions etc.".*	Hybrid Practice-based theory Theory-based practice Drivers of change Philosophy not just function
What marketing themes would you have for marketing at this level? *How to influence buyer behaviour. Research. Driving innovation. Multi-channel marketing. Finance. Product and service management. Sectorisation. Branding. Integrated marketing communications. Customer experience.*	Marketing education

"No need for a framework as people should apply their own knowledge and learning". *Don't call it Global marketing. People management. Digital. Analysis. Structure so that senior managers can overlay experience. Framework showing marketing management. Insight. Granular, micro level.*	
How would you demonstrate practicality of the qualification? *Case studies applied to practice. Work-based assignments. "Practical application is so much more valuable".* *Show practicality through assessment. Set something at beginning to measure metrics at own company.*	Practice Application of practice Practicality through assessment SME relevance Practice knowledge
Miscellaneous	Intuition Instinctive Tacit knowledge Informal knowledge Common sense Intuition Tacit knowledge Hybrid Apply practice knowledge to theory Apply theory to practice knowledge Practice experience Connected Synthesis

Key question of the focus group - What do you make of the survey question "How would you demonstrate practicality of the qualification? – solicited this response:

> **"*A lot of our students are practising marketers. Some are employed but some are self-employed, have consultancies, their own small businesses. They a have a lot of experience…. even if some of them don't really call it that or know it".***

Asked what type of knowledge MEP students have, intuitive, tacit knowledge, practice knowledge or theoretical knowledge was suggested:

"Yes. They come to us to get that formal marketing education. They want the latest 'received wisdom' on digital, communications and so on. They have 'common sense', practice experience. Not the theory in the majority of cases. Or the qualifications. they apply their practice knowledge to the theory and vice versa. A lot have reflected that in the survey: it's a 'how to' syllabus as much as a 'why' or 'logic'".

When asked whether the MEP offer more practical knowledge or theoretical knowledge:

"That's an odd question because the two are combined aren't they? We really try to synthesise that but we have the advantage of practitioners coming to us, so we do have a good working relationship and, I suppose, a dialogue. That's what this survey proves I suppose".

7.3.5 **In-depth interview: Academic at AOM Conference (AOM2)**

Following my presentation 'Marketing *in situ;* marketing *in aspic*: the relevance of marketing theory to marketing practice' at the 2013 Academy of Marketing Conference in Cardiff, I was approached by academic regarding the substance of my talk – the disconnection between marketing theory and practice – and engaged in a lengthy discussion on how marketing theory develops/was developing. This culminated in several writing collaborations on this subject area, the gist of which has been combined with email communications on the same below as evidence of how knowledge is negotiated and presented academically.

Below are extracts of a detailed conversation and subsequent email negotiations demonstrating how two academics discuss, analyse and conceive what their perspective of marketing knowledge and hegemony within the academy is.

Table 7.6 Initial transcript coding (AOM2)

Transcript extracts	**Specific codes**

Dislocation between strategy and practice; overbearing Cartesian assumptions of theory. Dominant discourses. Cartesian separation of mind and body. How they penetrate discourses. between strategists and practitioners. Narratives, metaphors That battle between rationality and subjectivity. *It's that dislocation between strategy and practice. The dominant discourses. Strategy is abstract 'dead', separated. The practical world is the opposite. Your "in situ/in aspic" theme. The two worlds are separated by different logics. Practice gets a raw deal. Theorists rule the roost and have a self-appointed privilege. Because it's not scientific*. *The real world. Practice. It's the poor relation. Being denigrated under the persistent influence of Cartesian separation of mind and body.*	Dislocation between strategy and practice "Cartesian assumptions of theory" Dominant discourses Cartesian separation of mind and body How they penetrate discourses between strategists and practitioners Narratives, metaphors Rationality and subjectivity Dominant discourses Strategy is abstract Separated (practical world is the opposite) "in situ/in aspic" theme Two worlds are separated by different logics Practice gets a raw deal Theorists rule the roost and have a self-appointed privilege Real world Practice poor relation Denigrated under the persistent influence of Cartesian separation

The author stimulated the debate with a comment about research:

> "***This is what I'm researching – separation and connection; theory and practice. Does what we do in the academy, text books, published papers impact on SMEs, B2B? I'm working on what constitutes 'marketing knowledge': is it generated from the market place or scientifically deduced? That's the 'in situ/in aspic' bit. Also, the flow can be either way: practice to theory or theory to practice or 'context to text to context'".***

7.3.6 **Online discussion: Researchgate Academics' forum**

Included here is a summary of a conversation extracted from an online debate on the academics' website *Researchgate* (see *Appendices* for full transcript) which demonstrates how perspectives of marketing knowledge are debated *al fresco* as it were.

Table 7.7 Initial transcript coding (RGA1)

Interview transcript	**Initial coding**
RGA1: Can anyone provide me with some hints or literature on classification of services according to Service Dominant Logic? I am looking for a way to classify services according to Service dominant logic? Can anyone provide me with some hints or literature?	Prescribed Service logic
Author: SD Logic is mainly a synthesis of established theoretical and practical elements. It has been given the accolade of being a new paradigm to challenge the normative managerial marketing 'product' model, but this is really not the case. It is not a paradigm shift; it is another parallax perspective. Whilst co-creation & complicity in relationships is obviously a key ingredient to successful marketing, this phenomenon was there before Vargo and Lusch. Intellectualising practice is our raison d'etre, and this is often insightful and creative, but often it merely reflects in situ praxis. Vargo and Lusch's work is a great piece of literature review and synthesis but it has been erroneously elevated beyond a statement of the obvious in my opinion. If you want to take up the heterodoxical view that SDL is over-stated, I'd be happy to open a conversation on ….	
Author: Marketing academics are always desperate to acclaim the latest paradigm; that's what we do. The quest for the Holy Grail of THE normative theory makes us consider various societal or social variations of how practice is reflected in theory and how theory is reflected in practice. The problem I see with the 'ground-breaking' SD Logic is that it purports to claim credit for something which had been practiced long before Vargo and Lusch discovered the marketing New World: the co-creation of	

value-in-use with the dual complicity and symbiosis of company and customer was well-established praxis, particularly in the interconnected environs of B2B. That circular, iterative process is evident even before the authentic service marketing paradigm shifts of the '80s. Bitner et al proved that the 'service sector' was a mirage. With precision and illumination, they articulated the all-pervasive nature of 'service logic' and were instrumental in persuading marketing academics to 'break away from the product perspective' and accept prevailing marketing practice. They were progenitors to Vargo and Lusch and, it could be argued, the true authors of the notion of value creation. Presenting a synthesis of the nature of this phenomenon does not amount to a paradigm shift but merely another parallax perspective.	
Author: I agree that "Marketing science has a mission to understand and support what's going on in "real life" and to make serving more successful for all parties involved". The connection and disconnection between theory and practice IS important and is the key focus of my research. The in situ dynamic nature of praxis; the in aspic aspect of academe. That's what makes it interesting This point: "And rather than focusing on what Vargo/Lusch didn't do it bring some insights to look at what they actually do very well and how they contributed to marketing science and its implications of business" is my whole point: they regurgitated what was already there. This point "It's like looking at a beautiful circle with a few black holes. You decide where to look at" is certainly beautiful poetry BUT it is also exactly MY point: V&L's 'paradigm shift' was nothing of the sort; it was another parallax perspective.	

7.3.7 **Note on coding procedures and summary of data themes**

As with *Chapter 6* above, the extracts above have been presented in the form of 'concepts' and 'categories' which have emerged from the interview data. This first level of coding ('open coding') have been split into: 'common' codes which are concepts occurring regularly in more than one transcript; and 'specific' codes which are peculiar to the participant's specific context. A full summary of all emerging themes extracted from the initial coding of transcripts in this

section have been collated and are presented in *Table 4.1 Initial emerging and final coding themes summary* in Section 4.4 below.

7.3.8 **Marketing knowledge as it is explicitly expressed in written discourse**

Although Marketing is generally anchored in the applied domain, knowledge as it is explicitly expressed in written discourse sits alongside knowledge in practice, evidenced mainly in word rather than in deed. Brown (2005:2) emphasises this point arguing that "research doesn't really exist until it is expressed in some sort of published form". And yet the impact of *writing* in academic marketing discourse, therefore, cannot be under-estimated. Many authors have published their research from an explicit discourse-analytic perspective (Ardley and Quinn, *ibid,* p.99). Texts have the fingerprints of disciplinary activities, scholarly affiliations, evidence of conventions, consensus of argumentation and "offer a window on the practice and beliefs of the communities for whom they have meaning". The purpose of marketing scholarship is described by Hackley (2001) as being either descriptive or prescriptive (or both), depending upon the axiological ambitions of the academic concerned. Hyland (2004:5). At worst, the nature of marketing writing is *post hoc* post-practice. Wetherell, Yates, and Taylor (2001:7) caution that "discourse, by its very nature, may not always be transparent; it is reflective, and it is constitutive and referential in terms of it being the site where meanings are made and negotiated". At best, it is often symbiotic not secondary, created and reified *in situ*.

One of the influential text book authors (*ITBA1)* interviewed had this to say on the veracity of practice evidence in text books:

> **"*I wanted to make it* [representation of practice] *as authentic as possible to give students a taste of theory applied to an actual practical context. Because theory without context is not as real".***

7.3.9 **The relevance of publication and the power of a restrictive citation system**

Discourse through the publication of academic marketing theory should be both reflective *of* and instrumental *in* the production of marketing knowledge. However, there is evidence that relevance has become stunted and choked by the restrictive power of the citation system, especially the normative practice of publishing largely inappropriate positivistic papers with an excessive emphasis on the *Journal Impact Factors Index* (Baker, 2010). Hunt (*op. cit.* p.14)

claims that "Marketing's academic literature, like that of all disciplines, is shaped by two primary factors: (1) the research interests and skills of marketing faculty and (2) the norms employed by journal reviewers and editors in the peer review process". The restriction and constriction of the citation system, seen by some as a self-referential referencing closed shop, is superbly summed up by Brown (1995:691): "Invention is as important as convention. Almost without exception the papers are much longer, more rigorous methodologically, more sophisticated philosophically and more citation strewn than before…Nevertheless, it is important to appreciate that however widespread this sense of ennui and stasis, no matter how degenerate – in Lakatosian terms – a research programme becomes, regardless of currents and turbulence in the prevailing intellectual climate, significant change cannot be divorced from the politics of publishing, the peer review system in particular".

Sparks (2010:5) is condemnatory of the restrictive, reductionist academic publications for limiting exposure to real-life applied marketing theory: "How can we seriously complain about practitioner disdain when we do everything in our power to keep them out? The divide between practice and theory is a real one but bridging the divide won't be possible until we understand where the divide, at least in part, originated and how it is maintained".

This is borne out in the empirical research of practitioners in *Chapter 4*. When asked did he read any academic papers or texts, *IMC2* replied:

> ***"Text books yes, but not anything academic. That world is insular, a bit 'ivory towers' for me. I can't see how it would be relevant to what is done in the actual marketplace".***

According to Sivadas and Johnson's (2005:339) analysis of eight key marketing journals, the integrity of marketing knowledge as expressed in academic journals is questioned for exhibiting "cumulativeness and knowledge diffusion" with significant inter-journal and cross-author reciprocation. Brown (2005:12) even suggested an incestuous "you scratch my back catalogue, I'll scratch yours" internalised circle. McKenzie *et al* (2002: 1207) question the lack of impact this has on practitioners by asking "is the refereed paper a staging post or a cul-de-sac?" What is being referred to here is the esoteric, insular knowledge not being transmitted to practitioners, something which Wilkie and Moore (2003:141) caution as 'troubling to realise that knowledge does not necessarily accumulate in a field and can disappear over time if not actually transmitted'. Polonsky and Whitelaw (2005:198) argue that the blame partly lies with

academic institutions globally who encourage publication in the most prestigious journals to the detriment of influencing practice: "Prestige first; contribution to theory, second; and contribution to practice and teaching, a poor third and fourth".

Again, the experience from a provider of marketing education, *HE1* a Higher Education lecturer gave this answer when asked to suggest how business schools could be more practitioner-oriented:

> **"*Stopping the obsession with publication. I know it's a Government pressure, but students are not interested in what we publish. It's what we teach and how it applies to practice, real-life, employment".***

7.3.10 The power of texts in enforcing the marketing management rhetoric

Mainstream marketing texts have remained clearly focused on the so-called 'marketing management' perspective" (Wensley, 2007:242), the discourse embedded in the major marketing textbooks forming the primary knowledge base of the discipline. Hackley (2003:1326) suggests that "popular marketing management rhetoric is a special case because it positions itself not only as a prescriptive management-consulting framework but also as a legitimate academic field". It can be argued that this conveys, as Scott (1994) claims, an implicit theory of reading, assuming a 'hegemonic' relationship between the text and the uncritical and unreflective reader. Baker's criticisms of textbook presentations of marketing are that: they are based on limited real-world data (and focused almost exclusively on mass-marketed, packaged consumer goods); services are treated as a 'special case' to product-oriented texts; business-to-business is marginally featured in comparison to consumer markets; and new knowledge is piled on top of old knowledge without being integrated; pedagogical design forcing form over content; and there is still an American 'formula' and perspective of marketing. The literary stylists who have helped 'managerial marketing' become a genre in its own right – such as Philip Kotler and Ted Levitt – have used the written word as the medium through which Marketing ideas and concepts have become popularised (Brown, 2005).

An interesting extract from the data captured is from a lecturer for a UK marketing education provider (*LMEP1)* when referring to the 'agenda' of managerialism:

"*The theory agreed by those who write the MEP course work is the agenda. Practice is where the conversation takes us".*

7.4 Chapter review

In this chapter, the second of a trilogy of chapters forming the integrated analysis of findings, results from empirical research on the theoretical perspectives of marketing was examined, describing how the marketing discipline is conceived, reified from practice, negotiated within the marketing academy, and expressed in published textbooks and academic journals. Extracts from the experiences of a wide range of academic marketing constituencies were presented in the form of summary vignettes and analyses. Concepts and themes were extracted, coded and synthesised to form a rich picture from the qualitative data. The impact and nature of marketing scholarship and marketing management rhetoric expressed through marketing textbooks was examined, alongside arguments as to why the publication citation system is a limiting factor to marketing as it is theorised in written discourse. Relevant theory accompanied a range of empirical data collected from observation and the personal experiential testimonies of a broad reach of marketing constituencies.

This chapter is important in the overall picture of presenting empirical experience and sits alongside the evidence of marketing practice in *Chapter 6*. It allows comparison of the epistemological bases and values between the two epistemes of marketing knowledge and acts as preparation for a critical analysis of perceived and actual disconnects. It introduced some of the characters in the theory-based marketing constituencies, citing evidence of dichotomy and possible collaboration.

8 *Chapter Eight* Pedagogical perspectives: Marketing as it is taught

8.1 Outline of chapter

The previous chapters, *Chapter 6 Contextual perspectives: Marketing as it is practised* and *Chapter 7 Conceptual perspectives: Marketing as it is theorised*, evidenced both contextual and textual empirical data. This chapter examines some of the recorded experiences of Higher Education, Further Education and Marketing Education Providers Centre lecturers, Undergraduate and Post-Graduate students, as well as marketing text book authors to give varied different pedagogical perspectives of how marketing knowledge is provided and consumed.

8.2 Introduction

In some ways, marketing pedagogy should be a lynchpin between practice-based theory and theoretically-informed practice, integrating the elements of successful marketing praxis. Pedagogical practice is, as Gadotti (1996: 67) states, "the horizon, the aim of the theory". And yet the contextual and textual empirical data presented in the previous two chapters bears witness to a dilemma of dichotomy which mitigates away from collegiate combination. Only by examining the second part of this trilogy, the demands and constraints of marketing educational provision, can we begin to see the opportunities for a marketing pedagogy more relevant to marketing practice.

8.3 The marketisation of education

The dynamic of any organisation is contingent on its environmental context; no more so than in the Higher Education (HE) Sector. The HE landscape of a 'welfare-state' being transformed into a 'market-state', where an emergent dialogue on 'the student as consumer' has infused an axiological debate on the *raison d'etre* of Universities and colleges as well as impacting on other educational providers. This shift from public to market system puts a greater emphasis on the *uses* rather than the *purposes* of higher education (Scott, 2010) with prospective students calculating higher education not just as a *cost* but as *return on investment* with an increasing focus on graduate employment: the pursuit of *hire* not higher education (Buccella, 2011:41).

The practices, values and techniques of the marketplace have transformed institutions into businesses with the role of the Business School seen as either the exposition of knowledge as an academic social science faculty or in the preparation of graduates for employment (Sharkey

and Tempest, 2009). The culture of audit compliance has turned universities from 'communities of scholars' into 'workplaces' (Smith and Webster, 1997; Henkel, 2000) and managerialism has achieved primacy over profession and community.

The pedagogical imperative, with students as 'consumers', has fundamentally changed the University raison d'être: the practices, values and techniques of the marketplace have transformed institutions into businesses with the emphasis on managing resources not the co-creation of value.

8.4 The student as consumer of knowledge

In the *Dearing Report on Higher Education* (1977), the reference to students as 'consumers' emphasised the commodification of education, a yardstick for educational stakeholder responsibility, accountability and, because of the 'impact' and employability agendas, an increasing need for practical application. Consumer satisfaction in HEIs, particularly in England, has become the locus of learning (Lesnick-Oberstein, 2015), something increasingly recognised by students who not only demand an enhanced experience from HE, but question the relevance of HE education to the real world (Kandiko and Mawer, 2013). The tripling of tuition fees, endorsed by the Browne Review (2010), followed quickly by the National Student Survey (NSS) have emphasised this even more. The radical change in consumption patterns and the focus on the performative value of knowledge in terms of 'employability' has changed the emphasis in knowledge consumption and consequently knowledge production.

8.5 Business School fitness for purpose

One impact of the new HE landscape is the enforced narrowing of the gap between marketing academia and marketing practice. The role of the business school as conduit for management training or social science faculty has been well rehearsed from the likes of Dikinson (1983:51) "academics have little interest in practitioners and their ideas" and more recently with Baker and Erdogan (2000), Riebstien *et al* (2009) and Baron *et al* (2011) who acknowledge the disconnect between the priorities and marketing academics and executives.

The practitioner pressure for outcomes-based curricula, where employability is a product of learning and "learning has become something to be delivered to students in ready-made packages in order for them to simply consume learning" (Wheelahan, 2010:20), has caused a displacement of knowledge. The disparity between the academic and practitioner - the most

pressing issue for UK academics according to Baker and Erdogan (2000) - shows a failure to adopt a more student-oriented, critical theoretical approach to challenging accepted marketing paradigms and covering a contextual application of theory (Burton 2000; Brownlie 2006).

Reibstein *et al* (2009:1) describe criticisms levelled at the dominant MBA programmes which "focus on narrow analytical and cognitive skills, stylised treatment of complex issues by teachers with no direct business experience, self-centred careerism and the declining recognition that management is as much a clinical art as a science". This dilemma is magnified in marketing where connection to stakeholders and customers is essential. Muniapan, Gregory and Ling (2007) identify this disconnection in marketing education (specifically UK HEIs) and the requirements of marketing practitioners.

At the heart of this debate are the aims of rigour and relevance. The problem is, as Bennis and O'Toole (2005:101) point out, "not that Business Schools have embraced scientific rigour but that they have forsaken other forms of knowledge".

Hackley *op. cit.* refers to an "ontological space between the classroom and the world of Marketing practice" leading to a "serious impediment to a critical understanding of the discipline" (p.129). Baker (2013: 223) claims that for scholarship to be successful, a marketing educator must have engagement with "whose involvement with students, practitioners and policy makers are all essential if one is to have a real effect on the discipline". Hughes, Tapp and Hughes (2007) highlight four key factors which will improve knowledge transfer and help bridge this gap:

- attitudes towards academic/practitioner engagement;
- institutional drivers such as funding bodies, professional bodies;
- content needs to be appropriate, applicable and accessible to the parties involved if the exchange is to have mutual value; and finally,
- relationships across the gap need to be proactively developed and managed for effective knowledge exchange.

Recently, there has been an increasing amount of attention given to pedagogy which is practice-oriented, with Practice-Based Studies (PBS) featuring in managerial and organisational

research into knowledge creation. Practice as epistemology sits right in the critical marketing camp, still without recognition of being a generative source of knowledge. Cohen (1996) distinguishes between theories of *action* (located in the intentionality of practitioners) and theories of *practice* (located in the patterns of performativity). The notion of a mutual community of practice between producers and consumers of knowledge within the institutional

in the knowledge producing process; they are part of a continuous homogenous single entity separated more by ontological vested interests – the recording and regurgitation of action – as by the distinctiveness of their epistemological roots.

8.6 The empirical evidence of pedagogical marketing constituencies

To complement and contextualise the evidence of marketing thought as discussed in the *Chapter 7*, and the evidence of marketing practice as discussed in the *Chapter 6*, a wide range of participants who influence and are influenced by marketing pedagogy – text book authors, marketing education providers, lecturers, students and prospective students - were interviewed, where possible, in quasi-laboratory conditions (ie: the natural habitus usually associated with their profession or consumption of marketing knowledge). Theory has been integrated with empirical evidence in order to best synthesise theoretical knowledge and actual practitioner experience. Below in *Table 8.1 Pedagogical research participants including data capture method* is a selection of research participants chosen to represent the various pedagogical marketing constituencies in terms of production and consumption of *institutionalised* marketing knowledge. pedagogical marketing constituencies Data capture methods, together with assigned research label are illustrated for reference.

Table 8.1 Pedagogical research participants by data capture method

Marketing constituency	**Method of data capture**	**Research label**
PG students Pilot study	Informal semi-structured focus group	PGSFG
Higher Education (HE) lecturer	In-depth face-to-face interview	HEL1

Higher Education (HE) lecturer	In-depth face-to-face interview	HEL2
Further Education (FE) lecturer	In-depth face-to-face interview	FEL1
Influential Text Book Author	In-depth face-to-face interview	ITBA1
Lecturer Marketing Education Providers	MEP Centre Lecturer	LMEP1
Post-Graduate (PG) Student	Student	PGS1
Under-Graduate (UG) Students	Students	UG1-6
Post-Experience (PE) Students	Student	PE1-6

Source: Author's illustration

For clarity, the presentation of data capture and analyses in each of the three sections has data taken from the interviews for all constituencies has been organised in the following manner:

- Precisé vignettes discussed as reflective of praxis.
- Individual summative extracted compared 'common' and 'specific' coded data. ('Common' data are that which recur frequently; 'specific' data are those peculiar to the context of the participant).
- Verbatim transcripts are available to view in the appendices.

In addition, a comprehensive final coding summary is presented in *Chapter 5* as part of the analysis and interpretation of all data.

8.6.1 **In-depth interview: Higher Education Lecturer (HEL1)**

Having spent several years in an ***"industrial marketing role and subsequently lecturing in several business schools for 20 years"*** HEL1 has made the transition to HE lecturer but not teaching UG and PG Marketing as a key subject.

Table 8.2 Higher Education Lecturer (HEL1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Formal marketing qualifications Theory Customer-orientation	B2B Theoretical/practical orientation Practical Hybrid Disseminator of marketing knowledge

Introduction to theory came through ***"CIM courses then MBA"*** with practical knowledge coming ***"In my second position when I moved from sales into global marketing"***. Contribution to the field is ***"As a good teacher and supervisor"***.

8.6.2 In-depth interview: Higher Education Lecturer (HEL2)

With a BA Economics and having spent several years in industry and established a number of companies, HE2 has made the transition to HE lecturer teaching UG and PG Marketing.

Table 8.3 Higher Education Lecturer (HEL1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Qualifications Theoretical Customer-orientation	Hybrid Real-world dynamics Practical application

HEL2 feels that:

> **"*My background in Economics helped to understand the competitive nature of industry therefore the need to differentiate the firm. Communication of such differentiation was how I first understood the importance (and***

usefulness) of marketing. Establishing my own companies (5) since then substantiated and focused on this practice and effort".

Exposure to marketing has been:

"*Informal in the workplace, followed by PG education in late 30s (MBA)".*

Exposure to marketing education (teaching) has been:

"*As part of lecturing on UG and PG Programmes, more specifically on Change Management and Creative Thinking/Problem Solving. Also, as part of the University's Venture and Accelerate Programme for budding entrepreneurs".*

He states that the role of marketing is **"*Reflecting practitioner perspectives in academia".***

8.6.3 In-depth interview: Further Education Lecturer (FEL1)

With formal BA MBA qualifications, and having spent a limited time in retail, FEL1 has made the transition to FE lecturer teaching UG and PG Marketing.

Table 8.4 Higher Education Lecturer (FEL1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Formulaic Prescribed Theoretical	Narrow teaching Institutional Vocational User Practical application Teaching Practical/vocational Institutionalised teaching Teaching Narrow teaching Text book teaching

FEL1 describes her contribution to marketing as:

> **"*Teacher, tutor, mentor and Programme Leader. I organise trips to local shopping centres to show students 'marketing in action'".***

Exposure to marketing has been enhanced by:

> **"*UG Dissertations. CIM Networking"*** and the purpose of marketing was: **"*Preparing Undergraduates for employment".***

When asked about critical perspectives of marketing:

> **"*Up until then Marketing was all fun, positive. Although I agree with it, the criticisms of marketing made it too serious in the sessions and made it more difficult to enjoy".***

Probed further about the Critical Marketing School and her ignorance of same, (Yes, but you must have some reference to alternative academic views?), FEL1 stated:

> ***"I don't teach that. I just stick to the 4 Ps formula, applying it to real life brands. Kotler must have it right. That fella's been selling out for years. Marketing isn't really academic is it? It's just common sense".***

8.6.4 **In-depth interview: Influential text book author (ITBA1)**

This leading text book author was interviewed at an AOM Conference in Cardiff. The name of his University and the manufacturers referred to have been disguised to protect his anonymity.

Table 8.5 Influential text book author (ITBA1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Prescribed theory Critical perspectives Theoretical	Real world

Strategy	Theory applied to an actual practical context Practice-based theory Empirical evidence Theory without context is not as real Academic/practitioner Practice-based theory Distribution channels

Asked about the intention of his text book, *ITBA1* stated:

> ***"I wanted to make it as authentic as possible to give students a taste of theory applied to an actual practical context. Because theory without context is not as real. Not as authentic. I applied the rules of strategy [theory] to the facts as I saw them applied by companies operating in that sector: distribution, margins, promotion, pricing. You know, the push through the channels and so on".***

ITBA1 expressed a view that practice should have precedence over theory. When queried, he commented:

> **"*As a teacher (in terms of the book and as a lecturer), that's our job: to guide students concepts and ideas. To apply them to a situation in the real world. Tutors need to get through a lot of theory. As an academic, like today's sessions, we're free to cogitate and speculate".***

When asked what for an example taken from conference that translates into the real world, that finds its way into text books or the classroom, he suggested:

> **"*CSR. The critical streams today have presented a sound case for questioning the normative Kotler view of marketing. Companies are practising that. That is real".***

8.6.5 **In-depth interview: Lecturer Marketing Education Providers (LMEP1)**

The MEP are an independent provider of marketing education. This interview was with a practising Marketing Manager who delivered MEP curricula to a part-time evening class at a MEP Centre in a Further Education College.

Table 8.6 Lecturer Marketing Education Providers (LMEP1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Formula Vocational Instrumental learning Qualification Employment Prescribed Formulaic Explicit knowledge	Theoretical-based practice Instrumental learning Qualification Employment Community of Practice

When asked about 'the process' of delivery, LMEP1 suggested that:

> **"*The students expect to learn, pass and get a qualification relevant to their employment. The process is applying a standard structure and content towards that. Students want a 'stiffening up' of their experience".***

The phrase 'stiffening up' was defined as:

> **"*I suppose I mean learning the language of Marketing, putting names to the concepts, learning new concepts, engaging in how theory applies to their particular work situation. Some just want promotion in work but others genuinely want to engage in the theory as applied to their sector".***

"learning the language of Marketing" was descried as:

"*The lexicon. It is like learning a new language. It's a good way in. Marketing is full of metaphors which help explanation, but some of the language is difficult for those new to it".*

"Preparing students for assessment", "Teaching the MEP curriculum".

When asked whether the curriculum and the process was too prescribed, the answer was:

"Sort of but the structure is great. We only use it as a sort of evening agenda and it really is a chance for an exchange of experiences, practice, yes, it's like an exchange of how things apply in the real world. I certainly talk about my experience: campaigns, things that I'm engaged in that week, why a campaign in the news is working, what it's aims".

8.6.6 **Online interview: PG Student (PGS1)**

PG1 is a Zimbabwean student whose Business degree included two marketing modules. Below are some extracts from his interview.

Table 8.7 Post-Graduate Student (PGS1)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Theory Practice Concepts Knowledge of subject	British qualification Real-life examples Pool of knowledge Wealth of experience Drawing examples from the lessons that have been experienced Practical application Relevance to work Progression

When asked about the purpose of the University:

> ***"Learning in a different country. Getting other people's experiences and the benefit of the tutor's knowledge. I will be continuing my education in another country – probably Australia – and this last year has given me so many useful insights and taught me so much about marketing".***

When asked about his relationship with the University, specifically the 'student as consumer' relationship, PSG1's view was:

> ***"I came to England to get the experience of a foreign, prestige Business School. The knowledge and experience of the tutor, all the business case examples. They are so valuable. It gave me confidence. I liked the way examples are given for all the theory we had. It helped me understand. I know we [foreign students] pay more than some of the UK students but it is what we have to pay."***.

Asked to elaborate on "examples are given for all the theory":

> ***"I had a good idea of the marketing concepts from my degree. Positioning, segmentation and so on. I've learnt a lot more now (I didn't know there were 7 Ps!) but it is much better as there are so many examples from other brands and organisations which they are applied to".***

8.6.7 **Focus group: Under-Graduate (UG) Students (UGS1-6)**

A focus group was held over 3 sessions with UG Business and Marketing students. Below are codes extracted from those interviews during their course.

Table 8.8 Under-Graduate Students (UGS1-6)

Common codes	**Specific codes**
Theory Practice Concepts Knowledge of subject	Confidence Real-life examples Case studies in seminars Case studies in text book

	Tutor knowledge Experience of tutor Practical application Employability Relevance to work Examples from the tutor experience Assignment preparation Progression

Students were asked about the purpose of the University:

> ***"I think our courses are becoming like training sessions. The content of some of our Tourism classes are really good for preparing us for employment. There isn't a lot of academic content though. There's some theory that gets applied but it's really about how to do it".***

> ***"The purpose of the business school is employability and learning. Applying real life to concepts".***

This shift from public to market system puts a greater emphasis on the *uses* rather than the *purposes* of higher education

Students were asked about their relationship with the University, specifically the 'student as consumer' relationship. Two different views were expressed:

> ***"I think it is wrong. I don't like being seen as a customer. I came to University for the experience, to get confidence and to get a qualification. It is seen as different to my parents' experience of going to University. They had a great time. We seem to be immediately bombarded with talk of jobs and employability. That's fine but it just spoils it"***.

> ***"That's not realistic. We pay a lot of money and deserve a decent education. If I don't leave with a good grade, I'm going to be unhappy. That's the least of my expectations. Surely we should be guaranteed a decent education if we invest £9,000 a year?!"***

These disparate views do tend to resonate with research done on student's identification as consumers (see Williams, 2013; Saunders, 2014).

Evidence shows that a *praxis of teaching* - practice informed by theory and theory informed by practice - used by educators to describe a recurring passage through a cyclical process of experiential learning needs to be part of an improved pedagogy. As Van Manen (1999) pointed out: "theory needs to be connected to practical, lived experiences both outside and within the classroom". It is the "synthetic product of the dialectic between theory and practice" according to Heilman (2003:274).

8.6.8 **Note on coding procedures and summary of data themes**

As with *Chapter 6 and 7* above, the extracts above have been presented in the form of 'concepts' and 'categories' which have emerged from the interview data. This first level of coding ('open coding') have been split into: 'common' codes which are concepts occurring regularly in more than one transcript; and 'specific' codes which are peculiar to the participant's specific context. A full summary of all emerging themes extracted from the initial coding of transcripts in this section have been collated and are presented in *Table 4.1 Initial emerging and final coding themes summary* in Section 4.4 below.

8.7 **Chapter review**

As producers, distributors and consumers of marketing knowledge, the constituencies responsible for marketing education act as a conduit for marketing theory whilst responding to the needs of marketing practice. In this chapter, the third of a trilogy of chapters forming the integrated analysis of findings, results from empirical research on the pedagogical perspectives of marketing was examined, describing how the marketing discipline is taught, and how marketing education is disseminated in Higher and Further educational establishments and educational providers. The changing dynamics of the HE and FE landscape has witnessed the marketisation of education which has accentuated the student as consumer and radically changing the relationship between universities and learners.

This chapter acts as a channel for the findings of the previous two chapters- marketing knowledge as it is practised and theorised - and is fundamentally important in acting as a potential bond between these separate but interrelated knowledge domains of theory and practice. It prepares the debate for final recommendations for developing better knowledge partnerships between academics and practitioners and help propose a better integration of

marketing theory and practice into the promotion of a best practice framework in marketing education.

Section Four Contributions and conclusions

Introduction to *Section Four* Contributions and conclusions.

This final section pulls the threads of the inquiry together, seeking to explicate and contextualise the author's interpretation of data from primary research and demonstrate original contribution to research and the body of marketing knowledge. *Chapter 9* is a detailed account of how the findings are translated into a unique ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model*** and explains in detail the dynamics of its constituent parts and justification for its logic. *Chapter 10* is a final, summative coda allowing reflection on the process of the PhD journey.

9 *Chapter Nine* **Conclusions**

9.1 **Outline of chapter**

A section which includes recommendations is necessarily summative but should also be conceptually conjectural as well in the sense that, like all good qualitative research, there should not be a finality but be part of a reiterative, creative on-going process of inquiry into knowledge production and dissemination. This chapter enables the author to make interpretations, speculations and connections between extant knowledge, empirical evidence and a lifetime's reflexivity of practical and conceptual marketing. Through inductive reasoning, generalisations have been made about *the roots and uses of marketing knowledge*, which have emerged from original data to reflect the findings of this inquiry. It describes the author's contribution to knowledge, encapsulated in the creation of a ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model***, and explains the bases of: its progenitors, content, process, applicability, and the dynamic, reiterative nature of marketing knowledge creation and use.

9.2 **Introduction**

Gummesson's (2010:5) questioning of the nature of marketing knowledge is a most apposite introduction to this penultimate chapter:

> *"What do we include in theory and practice? A crucial question is: can we claim that scientific knowledge is better than tuition, wisdom, and so on, or is it just different? Are they complementary, the ying and yang of knowledge development? Shouldn't we spend at least as much time on understanding the soul of intuition as we spend on statistical survey techniques?"*

The "soul of intuition", juxtaposed alongside the cognition and reason of theory, has been the touchstone in the search for truth in this inquiry which has borne all the hallmarks of good qualitative research: a search for meaning in social context and unique individual experience, discovered through a dialectic, inductive process of investigation where the author has been present as an active and interactive participant. The consistency between the research aims and objectives of this investigation – *a critical inquiry into the theory and practice of marketing* – and the methodology used – a qualitative phenomenological study using grounded theory – has produced a unique interpretation on the theory/practice divide.

In addition, as has been stated above, interpretation is subjective and subjective research is really a 'double process' of joint construction where the interpretation of the researcher and the interpretation of the participant t are fused in a joint *social* construction of a phenomenon. The etymology of 'phenomenology' is the Greek word *phainómenon* meaning 'that which appears'. The data which throws light on the phenomenon of marketing knowledge generation and consumption is drawn from the *accounts* or stories of the participants. The subsequent analysis is *an* interpretation of *their* interpretation of *their* experience which is taking place. The evidence, therefore, *appears* from the data; the *appearance* of reality is through individual interpretation.

9.3 **Contribution to knowledge**

The key criterion for assessment in doctoral study is that the process and product of a PhD thesis make a significant original contribution to knowledge. In so doing, the student must engage with and enhance theory. Understanding theory is a proxy for intelligence. Any theory tries to explain rationally the relationships between ideas and phenomena. Any 'new' theory (as the etymology of the Ancient Greek word *theoria* suggests) involves looking at phenomena so that 'reality' is configured through the perception of the observer. It shapes and structures the researcher's ontology.

What has emerged from the evidence of the data and the experience of the author is a *speculative theory* which adds value by trying to explain existing marketing knowledge and augments our perspective of the dynamics of its creation and consumption. Implicit in this is the recognition that any relevant, unique perspective must be built with rigour on the shoulders of others, whilst at the same time looking for a gap in the published literature.

Therefore, although this work may not be originary, through a rigorous and robust process of investigation and analysis, the author's impact on marketing knowledge - the fusion of thought, critical interpretation of phenomena and creative application - is original. That is, like so many academic claims in marketing, research rarely offers a completely new paradigm shift; rather, what is presented may be a new parallax perspective, a fresh reiteration of previous knowledge or a creative insight into practice in context. As well as being cognisant of all relevant theory, any novel addition to marketing discourse must be grounded in the authentic perspectives of practitioners and must be relevant to marketing pedagogy.

What is explicitly claimed in this thesis is the author's fusion of textual, contextual and pedagogical perspectives leading to the identification of both dyadic fusion not just dichotomy in marketing theory and practice epistemes. They are different; they do exist in dichotomous domains at times; they often come to know and use marketing knowledge in parallel not in unison. There is a gap in the literature between the conceptualisation and realisation of marketing practice, the hegemony of academic representations skewing perceptions of the phenomenon of marketing. However, the data presented in the integrated findings in *Chapters 6*, *7* and *8* shows that there is also a complementarity, a collaboration, which does not just characterise praxis but evidences a more appropriate, more relevant hybrid model of marketing theory and practice, one which identifies a weaving of these separate threads into a continuous, coterminous loop of context into text into context reiteration.

The creation of a unique 'marketing knowledge process' framework has both theoretical relevance and practical application. This echoes Kim *op. cit.* observation that rigorous research is the fundamental cornerstone upon which sound theory is transformed into effective practice but also the evidence of experience is translated into applicable theory. What is represented here is a cohesive, creative synthesis of the key strands of this inquiry, and reflective of the empirical data in the arguments presented, in the form of a ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model***. Below is a comprehensive dissection of the framework and constituent parts shown in relation to the research aims and research findings and how they have emerged from empirical data.

9.4 **Proposed Marketing Knowledge Process Model**

As Smith *et al*, (2015:1035) posit "The nature of marketing knowledge is that it can be generated both by the empiricism of the market place – the dynamic experiential in situ and ad hoc praxis – as well as scientifically deduced – post hoc, considered rationality. The flow can be either way; practice to theory or theory to practice. This 'context to text to context' phenomenon is an iterative process of re-cycling and re-invention; the exact nature of knowledge transfer is that the flow can be symbiotic yet intertwined". All this is captured in *Figure 9.1*: ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model*** which includes all the themes taken from the empirical data – '*Tacit knowledge*' and '*Explicit knowledge*', '*Disconnect and power; symmetry and asymmetry*', '*Hybridity and unity*', '*Transfer of knowledge and marketing praxis*' as well as '*Reiteration*'.

Below is a detailed discussion of the key elements of the model and how this works as a functioning framework.

9.4.1 **Progenitors of the Marketing Knowledge Process Model**

The use of a business model, either implicitly or explicitly, to describe the logic and architecture needed to deliver value to customers is essential to any business. Essentially, it expresses the relationships between knowledge *within* and *coming into* an organisation, and how that knowledge is *processed* and turned into some strategic competitive advantage. In relation to practice, academic perspectives are in both observation and parallel formation of knowledge; ideally, they are in unison. Marketing models are often extended metaphors (eg: the evergreen Marketing Mix or Relationship Marketing loyalty ladders), or frameworks which show use of resources, value creation or the strategic planning process (eg: McKinsey 7S model, Ansoff's matrix, BCG matrix, diffusion of innovation, Porter's 5 Forces and Value Chain, product life cycle or various pricing models). Some of these models tend to be linear and do not always reflect the nature of marketing as practised. A lot of knowledge models are focused on organisational use of information. Early ones such as information processing (Simon, 1973) 'garbage Can Theory' (Cohen, March and Olsen, 1972) and Senge's (1994) 'learning organisation' provide a foundation for models of this sort. However, in terms of knowledge processing, particularly in terms of releasing the potential of tacit knowledge within organisations, the internal organisation *SECI* model (Nonaka, Takeuchi and Umemoto,1995) is a good reference point for this. Its 'spiral' feature of knowledge creation is analogous with the model proposed; its 'engine' of knowledge creation rooted in the tacit know-how of practice. However, their focus on the knowledge domain as *internal* is unnecessarily restrictive and therefore limits its applicability in a generalised marketing context. Whilst it lacks the endogenous environmental dynamics of some of the traditional Kotlerian Marketing Information Systems (MkIS) variations of Management Information Systems (MIS), it nonetheless acknowledges the need to examine the tacit nature of practice knowledge.

In terms of 'knowledge transfer' models, Major and Cordey-Hayes (2000) describe two basic types: *node* models which analyse steps in the knowledge transfer process; and *process* models which look at the specific dynamics of the process.

9.4.2 **Basic logic of the Marketing Knowledge Process Model**

The genesis of this model – both as a working research framework and as an explication of how marketing knowledge is created and used – grew out of three specific factors: the author's experience as both a marketing practitioner and an academic; the author's previous research and publications in this area; and the empirical research done with key influencers in industry and the academy in this inquiry. The fusion of the experience of practice and the confirmation of theory can be signposted throughout the author's career in B2B marketing, where theory was observed in practice and authenticated in theory. Quite often, the evidence of practice was seen to precede its subsequent confirmation as some or other theoretical framework. Experiencing the juxtaposition of academia and commerce as a natural phenomenon (as opposed to opposing epistemes), whilst not unique, has provided a real stimulus to the author in terms of the perspective taken in this thesis. Indeed, the 'panopticon' perspective of being immersed in the phenomenon being observed, surrounded by all the marketing communities and yet also having had experience of all those constituencies, is entirely consistent with the overall emic and etic nature of the research aims and objectives (described above in detail in *Section 2.4.6 Researcher positionality and the need for reflexivity* and *Section 3.2 The introduction to Chapter 3 Research design*.

Figure 9.1 below describes a circular ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model*** featuring constituents and constituencies involved in this process. It is not a linear, static process but is characterised by linkages which reify practice, rehearse theory, and are interrelated. As stated above in *Section 1.9*, this inquiry has as its central focus the marketing theory into practice / marketing practice into theory conundrum. Therefore, this model includes:

- the *separation* (marketing theory and marketing practice);
- the *flows* (context to text to context: theory into practice/ practice into theory);
- the *symbiosis* (the theory and praxis of marketing pedagogy);
- practice/ practice into theory; and,
- the dynamic and static (in situ/in aspic) *nature* of their duality (Smith *et al*, 2015).

This model features the roots and uses of marketing knowledge in thought and deed, text and context, and maps the flows and nodes to aid an understanding of how marketing knowledge is generated. The key features of the schema for this model are as follows:

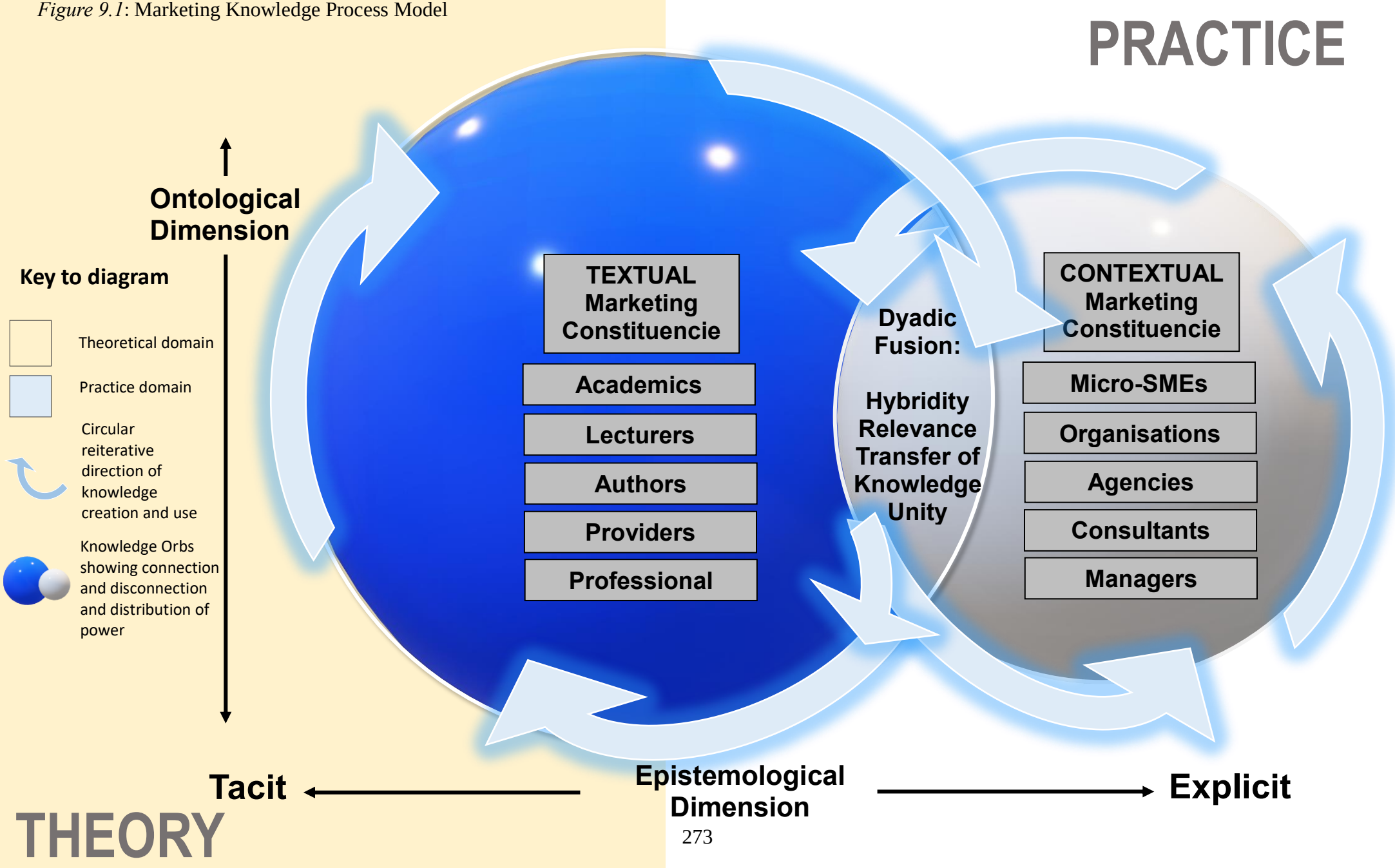
- Axis showing the epistemological dimensions of marketing knowledge.
- Axis showing the ontological dimensions of marketing knowledge.
- Knowledge domains.
- Marketing constituencies.
- Reiterative process.
- Transfer of knowledge.

These key elements are expanded and discussed below.

9.4.3 **Axis showing the epistemological dimensions of marketing knowledge**

As discussed previously, epistemology describes the relationship between the inquirer and the phenomenon being researched. Social researchers tend to be sceptical of objective truth – the objectivism of positivist viewpoints is often anathema to researchers who believe meaning is a product of social interaction and interpretation. In the case of this inquiry, the premise is that knowledge is constructed socially, (ie: a *social constructivist* perspective), where relationships between actors and structures are reciprocal and dialectical, therefore, is in *action* and *interaction*. Interpreting this action/interaction is the basis of the underlying: hermeneutic

Figure 9.1: Marketing Knowledge Process Model



Source: Author's own model

(meaning is achieved through participation in a dialogical manner); phenomenology (how individuals interpret the world); and symbolic interactionism (meaning is embedded in symbolic interaction and social significance).

The nature of marketing knowledge is illustrated on this axis as rooted in either practice, reflected in theory or both: *tacit* practice-based intuitive and unwritten expertise and experience; *explicit* theory-based marketing knowledge usually expressed in some form of published text; or an amalgam or hybrid of both. Noanaka and Takeuchi *op. cit.* describe knowledge on the epistemological side as being either tacit or explicit, with the ontological range being from the individual to team, group, organisation etc. They put this very well: "A spiral emerges when the interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge is elevated dynamically from a lower ontological to higher levels" (1995:57). Fendt, Kaminska-Labbe and Sachs (2008: 297) advocate pragmatism, encouraging a grounded approach to theory building and practitioners who are reflexive, producing knowledge-in-use theories that "underlie their actions, rendering in the process explicit what was hereto tacit." Velocity and immediacy of action is the essence here (reflected in the iterative, linked nature of the model featured in *Figure 9.1* above). This does reflect the dynamic *in situ* quality of practice set against the reactionary *in aspic* nature of theory.

9.4.4 **Axis showing the ontological dimensions of marketing knowledge**

Constructionism, as Numan (2003) suggests, is a product of social processes. It is a human construct (Mutch, 2005) in which there is no collective route to knowledge (Willis, 1995) and any analysis must be put into context (Reeves and Hedberg, 2003:32). The ontological dimensions of marketing knowledge refer to how individuals make sense of the multiple 'realities', created through agency, meaningful interaction of experience and interpretation. Ontology, in the context of this inquiry, refers to the marketing knowledge created by socially constructed understanding: the contextual knowledge from the community of practice. There are choices: an *a priori* ontological perspective is a pre-determined and objective construct independent of the input of actors: an *emergent* perspective is one which is undefined, dependent on interaction; and a *dualistic* ontological perspective which is created in context when particular actors and social structures interact (Tronvoll, Edvardsson and Vargo, 2011). The premise of this thesis is that marketing knowledge is *a posteriori*, grounded in structuralism. Therefore, the first perspective can be dismissed as it is as Giddens and

Dallmayr, (1982:29) state: “strong on action; weak on institutions” and this runs counter to this inquiry’s research aims and objectives. Indeed, interpretive research puts emphasis on better understanding of the world through first-hand experience, truthful reporting and actual conversations from insiders’ perspectives (Merriam, 1998). Similarly, phenomenologists (from Husserl onwards) have focused on the essential structures of a phenomenon being examined, the ‘lifeworld’, reflection on lived experience, participant’s narratives that emerge from data. The distinction has to be made here between an *idiographic* perspective of research – the subjective, cultural and individual case examination of a phenomenon where the individual is seen as a unique agent of a group or structure – and a *nomothetic* research approach – a generalised, group search for understanding where studying the structure of a cohort of individuals throws light on social meaning. Halling (2008) offers a middle ground – moving between abstraction and experience - accepting that idiographic research may also identify general structures of experience: particular experience, common themes from the phenomenon and then applying universal human aspects implicit in that experience. This is also consistent with a hermeneutic approach where the specific and the general, the individual and the whole are examined in conjunction to provide a fuller understanding of the phenomenon.

The ontological axis in this new model, therefore, shows the categories of participants. Here, the marketing ontology is comprised of the various marketing constituencies – the communities of practice as it were - that generate and use marketing knowledge. Tilly and Goodin (2006:20) attribute ontological choices as concerning “the sorts of social entities whose consistent existence analysts can reasonably assume”. These are the ontological entities - the individual actors and collective institutions engaged in marketing knowledge creation and use. It should be pointed out here that the selection of these marketing constituencies is a value judgement and as such an ontological choice by the author. They were seen, after some extended supervisory consultation, as being comprehensively representative.

To restate the fact that ontology refers to the ‘nature of being’ and the relationship between concepts and categories in a domain is important for clarity here. Acknowledging what Giddens (1984) referred to as “structuration” (the interaction between structures and agents) this is the fundamental ontology chosen here. In this case, marketing institutions and marketing actors is the ontology within the domain of marketing knowledge. This interaction, and indeed the relationship between actors and institutions, is critical; both constituent parts need to be examined both separately and together. This is consistent with a hermeneutic approach since

ontological individualism and ontological collectivism are examined separately and jointly here.

9.4.5 **Knowledge domains**

The parameters of what constitutes marketing constituencies and what their individual and collective contribution to what is perceived, learned or taught in what is meant by 'marketing knowledge' is being discussed. It is the realm of discourse, the landscape within which this meaning is negotiated. The two competing knowledge domains are: a socially constructed, *situated* view of knowledge dependent upon relationships and interaction; and a positivist, rational and *cognitive* conceptions of knowledge (Geiger, 2009). The data coded under '*Tacit knowledge*' and '*Explicit knowledge*' provide ample evidence of these two domains. There is no doubt that in the objectivist/subjectivist dichotomy is a source of polarised debate on knowledge but dissatisfaction with the relevance of theory to practice has shone a light on situated learning and contextual knowledge as an emerging domain. Again, illustrated above under '*Relevance*' and '*Transfer of knowledge and marketing praxis'*.

Whilst the information-processing perspective of marketing knowledge still dominates, the "practice turn" (Gherardi, 2009) espoused in Practice-Based Studies (PBS) has been a driving force in recent academic studies of organisational knowledge. Knowledge is no longer viewed simply as an object or asset, nor is it believed to reside in individual minds but concerning the understanding and skills necessary to the practice of marketing (Andreasen et al. 2005). Instead, PBS (employing much of 'practice theory') brings to the fore the concept of knowing as a situated activity which is collectively performed and is accomplished through the relational dynamics of practice and participation. The separate but linked provinces of academe and practice (and indeed examination of the overlap between the key fields) is therefore the key focus in this model and indeed inquiry.

9.4.6 **Marketing constituencies**

It is important to allow breathing space for participants to articulate their personal experiences in the context and value system relevant to themselves (Chase, 1995). The importance of context and environmental dynamics in terms of the origins of marketing knowledge, and application in terms of the value and practitioner frame of reference is critical in qualitative research. As Marshall and Rossman (1998:58) state, knowledge cannot be understood without

understanding the meaning attributed to marketing knowledge – their thoughts, feelings, beliefs and actions. As Lieblich and Josselson (1995: ix) suggest: "we come into contact with our participants as people engaged in the process of interpreting themselves".

The model above shows all the parties who represent and present different knowledge perspectives both in terms of published theory and practice. Although each constituency will have relative areas of expertise, the overlap between parties is significant.

The theme of the inquiry – practice and theory – is reflected in the comprehensive range of influential participants involved in marketing knowledge formation and use, selected from across a very broad spectrum of marketing constituencies. '*Contextual*' marketing constituencies are represented by organisations, managers, owner/drivers, consultants and agencies involved in the practice of marketing, '*Textual*' marketing constituencies are represented by academics, authors, educational institutions and lecturers, and professional bodies, involved in creating and disseminating the theory of marketing. All were interviewed, where possible, in situ in quasi-laboratory conditions. That is, those participants representing the main marketing discourses – both theoretical, practical and hybrid - and interviewed, where possible, in the natural habitus usually associated with their profession or consumption of marketing knowledge. *Section 3.8 Selection and justification of research participants* above details the wide range of participants from different marketing constituencies.

9.4.7 **Pedagogical perspectives**

The relevance of marketing theory to practice is an area of concern for academics. Burton (2001:743) argues that "few universities …. extensively teach marketing theory as part of the curriculum and few marketing academics have an interest in developing theory", development more likely to be generated through individual specialisms rather than some sort of general marketing theory.

The role of the business school as conduit for management training or social science faculty has been well rehearsed from the likes of Dikinson (1983:51) "academics have little interest in practitioners and their ideas" and more recently with Baker and Erdogan (2000), Riebstien *et al* (2009) and Baron *et al* 2011) who acknowledge the disconnect between the priorities and marketing academics and executives. Reibstein *et al* (2009:1) describe criticisms levelled at the dominant MBA programmes which "focus on narrow analytical and cognitive skills,

stylised treatment of complex issues by teachers with no direct business experience, self-centred careerism and the declining recognition that management is as much a clinical art as a science. It is further charged that the prevailing paradigm is as much reductionist, narrowly specified and fragmented research… cannot address the multi-functional and interconnected problems for managers.

Although these concerns loom large for managerial education in general, *the dilemma is magnified in marketing* – a field that is supposed to be concerned about the connection of the firm with its customers and other stakeholders". Muniapan, Gregory and Ling (2007) identify a gap in marketing education (specifically UK HEIs) and the requirements of marketing practitioners. UK Higher Education institutions – enjoying a high level of strategic and operational Public Sector autonomy – have gone through a period of reshaping and re-imagining fundamentally directed by the ideological context and organisational strategy laid down by the New Managerialism (NM) and New Public Management (NPM) Deem, Hillyard and Reed (2. p.1). The culture of audit compliance has turned universities from 'communities of scholars' into 'workplaces' (Smith and Webster, 1997; Henkel, 2000) and managerialism has achieved primacy over profession and community; the practices, values and techniques of the marketplace have transformed institutions into businesses.

The "pedagogical imperative to cater to employer's expectations of graduate competence, and student's desire for flexible provision" McCaffrey (2004, p.7). According to Shattock (2003: *ix*) "successful universities are successful primarily because of their teaching and research, not because of their management". There is a growing consensus that the theory/practice gap exists with varying perspectives including: academia's inability to understand how marketing is carried out in practice (McCole, 2004); the delivery of relevant marketing programmes that marketing managers need (Dacko, 2006); and research regarding the relevance of marketing knowledge (Brennan 2004). The role of the lecturer and learner in the HE learning experience is set to change: teaching should be research-informed and market-driven; the student experience should be culturally relevant and commercially-oriented.

Starkey and Madan *ibid* argue that Mode 2 knowledge production (M2K) is the optimum way for business schools to bridge the relevance gap between theory and practice, since it is primarily concerned with knowledge in *contextual application*. Mode 1 (M1K) knowledge is less concerned with knowledge *in use* and more concerned with theoretical knowledge.

Holbrook (2005:143) argues that "there is a fatal flaw in the ethos of marketing that has made our discipline uniquely susceptible to the degrading influences that have distracted us collectively from critical issues of the role of marketing in society" (2005:143). For him, the dogged pursuit of prescribed, theoretical knowledge as characteristic of relevance has limited its relevance not only to practice but in a wider societal perspective. He advocates a two-way knowledge diffusion feeding simultaneously into theory building and practice, enhancing relevance helping to bridge that theory/practice divide.

9.5 **Testing of the Marketing Knowledge Process Model**

The real test of any model of theory is its applicability to more than one limited situation and its persistence over time in the research literature" (Torocco and Holton (2002:134). Knowledge models of the type suggested by the author must be developed and verified on the basis of validation and rigorous testing. External consistency with traditional marketing knowledge and other theories has been supported by the integration of empirical data and extant marketing theory.

As Starkey and Madan (2001) state, cross-fertilisation of research in management and marketing is scant: there is a knowledge transfer deficiency. In the case of a marketing In terms of how the veracity (and indeed validity) of a knowledge theory can be tested, Lynham (2002:234) hits the nail on the head: "The recursive nature of applied theory-building requires the ongoing study, adaptation, development and improvement of the theory in action and ensures that the relevance and rigour of the theory are continuously attended to and improved on by theorists through further inquiry and application to practice and theorising components of applied theory-building research". It is the fact that marketing is an *applied* discipline which stands out from this quotation. Furthermore, Lynham's *op. cit.* method of theory building (which embraces many paradigmatic approaches) is particularly relevant. It is, therefore, intended to apply his framework to assessing the knowledge model proposed in this thesis. That framework is as follows:

- Conceptual development
- Operationalisation
- Confirmation or disconfirmation

- Application
- Continuous refinement and development.

Of course, as Lynham states, the order of this depends upon the type of research being undertaken and the nature of the subject matter being examined. It is suggested that grounded research, the main methodology for this inquiry into marketing knowledge, has a different sequence for analysis; that is the one adopted below.

Senge *et al* (1994) posited that there are two ways in which theories can be assessed: based on how that theory is derived and subsequently developed; and can be assessed as to its quality and maturity. The practical application of the model has been confidentially shared with some of the key participants of the research and feedback reinforces its veracity and relevance. Although not recorded as post-research evidence, this supports the view that knowledge from the market framed in a conceptual model does work and has relevance.

The knowledge transfer element of the model does have historical precedence but also is proven within the case analysis results and approval. Within the time constraints of the process of investigation – such a detailed, in-depth inquiry had to be meticulously designed and executed – the model which eventually emerged from the rich data has not been vigorously tested in practice (although it has been endorsed in theory) and this would be the natural next step in future research.

9.5.1 **Conceptual development and operationalisation**

This phase was instrumental in synthesising the research approach (see *Chapter 3*). As Lynham *ibid* suggests, it ('conceptual development') is useful "to develop an informed conceptual framework that provides an initial understanding and explanation of the nature and dynamics of the issue, problem or phenomenon that is the focus of the theory". In addition, it provides a basis for evaluation of the model.

Demonstrating marketing *in situ* alongside marketing *in aspic* – practice and theory juxtaposed - through modelling, anecdote, metaphor, case studies, empirical evidence and conceptual representations – help to operationalise theory.

Evidence of development *in vivo* as it were can be seen in the initial in *Figure 3.6 Research framework and marketing knowledge model synthesis*, designed to illustrate the recursive nature of the research process. This was subsequently developed into a comprehensive knowledge framework showing all elements and all data findings.

9.5.2 **Confirmation or disconfirmation**

Again, leaning heavily on Lynham's *op. cit.* direction, he suggests that "This phase results in a confirmed and trustworthy theory that can then be used with some confidence to inform better action and practice" (2002:233). The nature of this inquiry, and indeed the nature of the grounded research approach adopted to investigate it, is reiterative. The need to take the data back to the theory, to revisit themes which confirm or disconfirm the initial emerging theory, is the hallmark of this approach. At this stage in the development – confirmation or disconfirmation – it is "the recursive nature of applied theory-building research [which] requires the ongoing study, adaptation, development and improvement of the theory in action and ensures that the relevance and rigour of the theory are continuously attended to and improved on by theorists through further inquiry and application to practice and theorising components of applied theory building research" (Lynham, *op. cit.* p.234).

Some evidence showing the author's confirmation of this:

- Industry bodies are responsible for translating contemporary practice and integrating the latest academic thinking into their educational and training curricula. As part of the MEP Technical Committee, the author attended an intensive 'al fresco' set of workshops designed to create and recreate curricula that reflected practice and applied theory. Primary data from over 20 MEP Centres around the world analysed practitioner requirements for content and delivery of new MEP Post-Graduate curricula and were compared to the inquiry's outcomes. Checking the framework with some of the participating members of that team helped verify this.

- The two-year KTP consultancy (literally theory into practice and then practice into theory) was revisited and findings supported practice.

- Liaison with independent consultancies (and some who did not take part in the original research) were presented with an overall impression of the framework and findings and this received approval.

- Post-Graduate students were informally engaged with online and suggested the model would be an excellent pedagogical input.

- A selection of HE and FE lecturers were consulted and approved the pedagogical asects of the framework and agree that it reflected practice.

9.5.3 **Application**

A consideration for any theoretical models is "an obvious danger of trivialisation of scientific ideas …. [which] might compromise the original scientific conceptualisation when they are translated into practitioner language and practice" (Cornellisen *op. cit.* 321). The approach here has been to both contextualise and conceptualise what is known to constitute marketing knowledge. Its roots – either in applied practice or in theoretical discussion – in effect have provided the data from which to help conceptualising and operationalising our model. In other words, in qualitative research, the data is qualitative, and it is 'description' which is being sought.

9.6 **Research aims and objectives revisited**

At the beginning of this project, the broad vision (or aim) was to attempt a critical inquiry into the theory and practice of marketing. This investigation into the roots and uses of marketing knowledge targeted these more specific objectives concentrated on four key areas:

i. To examine and evaluate the epistemological bases and values of what constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice and critically analyse perceived and actual disconnects between these two epistemes.

ii. To identify and evaluate the explicit and implicit impact of various marketing constituencies on the production of marketing knowledge.

iii. To make recommendations for developing better knowledge partnerships between academics and practitioners.

Below is a brief review to explain how the approaches to research methodology, the selection of participants and the quality of the data extracted achieved of each objective.

9.6.1 **Research Objective 1**

With an in-depth discussion of the epistemological bases and values of marketing knowledge in its *textual* and *contextual* constituencies, *Research Objective 1* is addressed with empirical *in situ* evidence used both as structure and content of this debate. The clause 'what constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice' in this objective is defined by the subjective nature of the empirical evidence which is fixed in individual interpretation, the experiential evidence of various managers, consultants, lecturers, authors and so on. The ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model*** provides a visual reminder of the key focus of this objective. The axis showing 'the epistemological dimensions of marketing knowledge' sets the landscape within which the debate, and perceived schism, takes place. What constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice is presented as two opposing but interrelated epistemes. The perceived and actual disconnects between these two epistemes demonstrate hybrid theory/practice roots and consumption of marketing knowledge. The asymmetrical dispersion of power between academic and practitioner (depicted as theory and practice 'spheres' in *Figure 4.4*) reflects the epistemological hegemony of academia: explicit over tacit knowledge. The critical analysis of perceived and actual disconnects between these two epistemes emphasises the theme of 'relevance' which emerged from the data having a bearing on how this power will be abused or diffused in any progress towards unity.

9.6.2 **Research Objective 2**

Research Objective 2, aimed at identifying and evaluating the explicit and implicit impact of various marketing constituencies on the production of marketing knowledge, is illustrated in the knowledge domains and constituencies featured. The findings in *Chapters 4* and *5* identify tacit and explicit knowledge as being characteristic of these two domains. Here, the two polarities – the 'tacit' knowledge of the practitioner and the 'explicit' knowledge of the theoretician and teacher – were examined using a comprehensive set of practitioners, academics and lecturers, particularly some who had influence on the construction and dissemination of marketing knowledge. The range and quality of participants selected for the 'textual' and 'contextual' elements of the inquiry addressed the need for rigour and relevance and helped to prove that explicit and tacit knowledge can be complementary and are situated

in a continuum, which means that knowledge varies from tacit to explicit and vice versa. It was shown that tacit knowledge becomes accessible if it moves towards the explicit side of the continuum.

9.6.3 **Research Objective 3**

Whilst some challenge the view that business research *must* have explicit and immediate relevance to business practice, relevance to practice is a *sine quo non* of marketing knowledge. Others, like Lee and Greenley (2010:5), questions whether "marketing scholarship has any influence on, or relevance for, marketing practice" or indeed should have. Kerin (1992:332) identifies "innovation and entrepreneurship" as the key functions of marketing as it is practised, the responsibility and opportunity for examining this will "reside with marketing scholars, assuming the community of marketing scholars is prepared to venture onto the terrain they have laid claim to but never occupied".

Research Objective 3 addresses the aim of making recommendations for developing better knowledge partnerships between academics and practitioners. The findings clearly indicate that marketing academics, and indeed marketing research in general, cannot afford to be esoteric, critical or stray too much from the scientific and pseudo-scientific normative parameters of research.

9.7 **Recommendations**

The interpretations of research demand a statement of significance of the findings in the form of recommendations for action.

- It is recommended that a bilingual approach is taken to the analyses of theory and practice encouraging a more symmetrical representation of these opposing knowledge domains.

- It is recommended that a dyadic fusion approach to theory and practice is encouraged where dialogue replaces these opposing knowledge domains encouraging a more collegiate dynamic.

- It is recommended that the reiterative nature of context-to-text-to- context knowledge production in marketing is recognised and used as an insightful framework to aid connectivity between theory and practice.

- It is recommended that a practice-based approach to knowledge production is pursued where the knowledge as applied in practice is better represented in pedagogy.

- It is recommended that the promotion of 'pracademic' students have more employability and more business school curricula are more relevant.

9.8 Chapter review

The purpose of this inquiry has been to conduct a critical examination of the dynamics of marketing practice and marketing theory and evaluate its relevance and applicability in a pedagogical context. Implicit in this was the examination and evaluation of the epistemological bases and values of what constitutes marketing knowledge in theory and in practice and a critical analysis of perceived and actual disconnects between the two domains. To do this, an in-depth evaluation of the various marketing constituencies was undertaken to understand the dynamics, determine the explicit and implicit impacts, and make recommendations for developing better knowledge partnerships between academics and practitioners. A specific overall objective was to propose a better integration of marketing theory and practice into the promotion of a best practice framework in marketing education.

In this chapter, the author's main contribution to marketing knowledge - a unique ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model*** - has been explicated with a detailed account of how the extensive research findings have been absorbed into the dynamics of its constituent parts and justification for its logic. Data captured and analysed in *Chapters 6, 7* and *8* was described and discussed, with final coding themes of 'tacit and explicit knowledge', 'relevance', 'the transfer of knowledge and marketing praxis', 'disconnect and power', 'hybridity and unity', and 'reiteration' forming distinct discussion. Other components of the model, such as epistemological and ontological aspects, knowledge domains, marketing constituencies, pedagogical perspectives were discussed in detail and in context. Progenitors of the ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model***, its basic logic, and how the framework can be tested and applied were described with proposals on conceptual development and operation. Finally, research

objectives were revisited and evaluated against the methodology, methods and findings of this inquiry.

This chapter is important as both a synthesis of all the work engaged in, a summative assessment of all the assumptions and findings, and a statement of continuing conjectural engagement with this on-going process of inquiry. The need for further testing of the model, application to practice and the publication of the conceptualisation of this addition to knowledge is the next phase of this investigation. In this inquiry, both understanding *per se* and understanding *for use* have been comprehensively examined. Some knowledge will stay polarised in protected domains; certainly, the integrated analysis of findings documented in *Section 3* lend support for the maintenance of this theory/practice duality. However, there is evidence that a collaboration, borne out of dyadic fusion, will benefit the domains of practice, academe and pedagogy, and it is in this respect that this study makes a major contribution to our understanding of marketing theory and practice and how they might best be developed with rigour and relevance.

10 *Chapter Ten* Reflections and implications for future research

10.1 Outline of chapter

This chapter acts as a reflective coda in which the author considers the results of a long academic process. A section which includes recommendations is necessarily summative but should also be conceptually conjectural as well in the sense that, like all good qualitative research, there should not be a finality but be part of a reiterative, creative on-going process of inquiry into knowledge production and dissemination. This chapter enables the author to make interpretations, speculations and connections between extant knowledge, empirical evidence and a lifetime's reflexivity of practical and conceptual marketing. Through inductive reasoning, generalisations have been made about *the roots and uses of marketing knowledge*, which have emerged from original data to reflect the findings of this inquiry. It describes the author's contribution to knowledge, encapsulated in the creation of a ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model***, and explains the bases of: its progenitors, content, process, applicability, and the dynamic, reiterative nature of marketing knowledge creation and use.

It is appropriate in this final chapter to collect one's thoughts and reflect on the objectives, process and products of this emic, etic and epic journey and discuss the overall implications and limitations of the research findings. Put simply, ***"Has this work lived up to the promise of the premise?"*** The premise was 'The roots and uses of marketing knowledge: a critical inquiry into the theory and practice of marketing'. The objective was to ask the 'how' and 'why' questions of theory and practice. The measure of it will not only be what has been discovered but what has been entailed in that process of discovery.

In *Chapter 9*, interpretations, speculations and connections were made between extant knowledge, empirical evidence and a lifetime's reflexivity of practical and conceptual marketing comprehensively evidenced throughout *Chapters 6, 7 and 8*. Through inductive reasoning, a synthesis of analysis and interpretation was made about *the roots and uses of marketing knowledge* which have emerged from original data to reflect the findings of this inquiry.

The author's main contribution to knowledge, encapsulated in the creation of a ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model***, is that the dynamics of how marketing knowledge is conceived and consumed will be better understood, and that the findings and application of a dyadic

relationship approach will be relevant to the theoretical, practical and pedagogical domains of marketing knowledge.

10.2 Author reflections on the motivation for this inquiry

This work is the culmination of a lifetime's experience and exposure to marketing theory and marketing practice; it has been a reiterative and reflexive process combining theoretical and empirical marketing knowledge. The discussion, and indeed the evidence, is often interstitial in the sense that it is in between these two sources of knowledge but also sometimes a hybrid of the two: a "synthetic and magpie approach" as Sim and van Loom (2004) refer to it. It has been a journey of exposure to marketing knowledge and creation of marketing knowledge – in the marketplace, the classroom and academic discourse, either in text or context.

The author's approach to Marketing has been informed and conditioned by: formal graduate and post-graduate education; background as a Marketing practitioner and small business entrepreneur; and work-based capacity as researcher, author and Senior Lecturer in Further Education, Higher Education and Post-Experience education. Being exposed to the dynamics of Business-to-Business, immersed in the researching and writing of 'the meaning of marketing' and having a natural disposition to heterodoxy, have given a heightened interest in examining the marketing trifecta of: the general philosophy and production of theory; its practical pragmatic application; and the pedagogy of marketing education.

A personal observation is that marketing *knowledge* is a product of marketplace dynamics, theoretical observation and speculation, as well as a mixture of both; theory is often developed in isolation not collaboration, in spite of rather than because of these oppositional epistemes. Theoretical perspectives sometimes are ignorant of the diversity of marketing practice, evident in "the micro-discourses and narratives that marketing actors draw upon to represent their work" (Ardley and Quinn, 2014:97). Indeed, Triana (2009) describes theoretical observation - the distanced relationship between academics and practitioners - as "lecturing birds on flying". The separation gap is somewhere in the spaces between rigidity 'in aspic' and dynamism 'in situ', between rigour and relevance, theory and practice, and between *a posteriori* and *a priori* knowledge (Smith *et al*, 2015:1029).

Various movements, waves, schools (or any other synonym of 'paradigm') have masqueraded as an emerging trend or new perspective. Quite often, theory reflects practice and then becomes

reified in practice. The so-called 'Service-Dominant Logic', sutered together well-established marketing practice and academic observation with well-meaning intent but it reflected rather than reinvented practice. Precursors as early as Shostack's seminal 1977 "Breaking free of product marketing" paper had identified a shift from the prescribed American FMCG product-oriented marketing definition and painted our understanding of marketing on a much broader and comprehensive canvas.

And yet whilst there may not be a perfect fusion between empirical and philosophical evaluations of marketing, the synthesis of theory and practice – praxis – offers a perspective approaching a *rapprochement*. Praxis, according to Heilman, (2003:274) can be described as "a synthetic product of the dialectic between theory and practice" and, in this respect, praxis is both the fulcrum and essence of this inquiry. Often, the author has experienced marketing knowledge as practiced in the marketplace being reified as innovative theory and has questioned the validity of academic claims to authenticity.

As Cochoy (1998:196) argues, marketing is a performative science where science and practice can't be separated – the discipline-knowledge from the discipline-control - since it "simultaneously describes and constructs its subject matter……and arises in and through unified discourse".

This has been, and continues to be, of great personal and professional interest and has been the driving force of this inquiry.

Allied to this, the need and the desire to write is a primary motivation. The author likes to *write as a teacher and teach as a writer* and this has been a constant thread in the enthusiasm for this topic. One is guided by Richardson's (2005) criteria for good academic writing:

- having *substantive contribution* to understanding 'real' phenomena;
- demonstrating *aesthetic merit* in textual shape and inviting interpretive response;
- illustrating *reflexivity* in subjectively contributing as both product and producer of the text; and,
- achieving some sort of emotional or intellectual *impact*.

Her writing companion (Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre) illustrates how she uses writing as a method of data collection *in the writing,* perfectly capturing the joy of this PhD project: "a great part of inquiry is accomplished in the writing because writing *is* thinking, writing *is* analysis, writing *is* indeed a seductive, tangled *method* of discovery" (St. Pierre, 2005:970).

This is apposite: some of the author's data collection *in writing* is integrated in this thesis in the form of appropriate elements of previously published work incorporated into the thread of the inquiry which started before this PhD journey was embarked on. It references academic discourse and practitioner exchange that the author engaged in on the pages of text books, book chapters, journal articles, academic fora, as well as conference presentations, debates and proceedings.

Cresswell's (2007:179) wise words on this subject matter act as a timely reminder here to have the audience as the focus of academic writing: "Writing has an impact on the reader, who also makes an interpretation of the account and may form an entirely different interpretation than the author or the participants". Creswell (*op. cit.*p.178) further underlines this by stating that readers demand self-disclosure. So too Richardson and St. Pierre (2005:961) argue that researchers "do not have to play God, writing as disembodied, omniscient narrators, claiming universal and atemporal general knowledge".

And, of course, the joy of writing has necessarily been fuelled by the joy of reading: the rhythm and the rhetoric; the prosody and the polemic. Research has not been limited to marketing-only texts but the wisdom of other disciplines. To enhance this ability to have analytic distance from the data in order to develop meaningful theoretical insights, Glaser (1998:164) suggests reading widely in other disciplines. It has been an iterative process of discovery and creation like a kind of inter-textual, intellectual *matryoshka doll*: a multi-layered interlinked investigation. It has been one in which the author has been totally submersed and therefore will be analysed using interpretive – but necessarily subjective – research and analysis. But this is stated by way of explanation not qualification. As van Mannen (1990:20) so succinctly puts it: "...one needs to be as perceptive, insightful and discerning as one can be in order to show or disclose the phenomenon in its richness and in its greatest depth. Subjectivity means that researchers are strong in their orientation to the object of the study in *a unique and personal way*".

As Bryman (1988:61) suggests, qualitative research involves "a preparedness to empathise (though not necessarily to sympathise) with those being studied, but it also entails a capacity to penetrate the frames of meaning with which they operate".

10.3 **Objectives of inquiry**

Is the PhD process research, investigation or inquiry? Choosing an option reflects and reinforces our underlying philosophical preferences based on experience, perspective and contingent on context (Cameron and Price *op. cit.*). Whilst an *en*quiry might be asking the question, an *in*quiry is the comprehensive, systematic process of investigating a phenomenon with the aim of enhancing understanding and augmenting the body of knowledge of a discipline. As was stated at the start of this work, *understanding* is as important as explanation.

The purpose of any work of research, especially a thesis of this magnitude, is to demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the field and offer a new perspective on, or theory to, a body of knowledge.

According to Flick (1998:5), the purpose of qualitative research is "to discover the new and to develop empirically grounded theories". Gopaldas (2011: 203) describes how new theory or conceptions may arise in one of three ways: through ideation or intellectual 'kindling'; ideas that are 'constructed' drawing on other social science disciplines into theories; and then through the rigorous procedure of publication. The notion of 'intellectual kindling' brings to mind Plutarch's quote that "A mind is a fire to be kindled not a vessel to be filled". One of the objectives of any inquiry is to seek out knowledge, to reason and critically evaluate. The researcher's "intellectual responsibility" (Johnson and Duberley, 2003:1280) is to keep that curious mind continuously active. It is not just filling the mind with extant knowledge; it is to seek understanding and a new way of looking at knowledge. In addition, drawing on other social science disciplines has been an unexpected benefit of this inquiry. Explications of knowledge and approaches to research from works with an economic, anthropological, philosophical, psychological or sociological axis, or from the fields of Nursing, Education, Accountancy, Politics, Economics and so on have not only nourished understanding of the phenomena being investigated but enhanced the discussion and insight. The "rigorous procedure of publication" is certainly always a goal of academic writing, and, of course a pre-requisite of a PhD thesis is publishable quality. Whilst some of the thought process for this

work has been negotiated in text (as well as context), a goal is certainly to seek a wider pedagogical audience in the form of a text book.

The nexus of this inquiry has been the perennial dichotomy between theory and practice, something which Baker (2001:24) points out, "existed long before the subject of marketing became accepted as an academic discipline in its own right". Examining the often-incommensurable elements of marketing knowledge, this thesis argues for the type of polyphonic landscape espoused by the likes Saren (2007), Ellis *et al*, (2011) as well as Ardley and Quinn (2014) that will breed hybrid 'pracademics'. Searching for a 'practical theory', with a workable hybrid model of both tacit and explicit knowledge, reflects a lifetime's experience and the most challenging academic exercise for the author. Contributing knowledge to the larger body of marketing knowledge is the inspiration.

10.4 **Apperception**

In a qualitative inquiry of this sort, interpretation of participant's lived-in experience and meaning is textually mediated by the author and personally mediated by the reader. The absence of knowledge of subject and objectivity of researcher is practically and epistemologically impossible. The object of research "cannot be understood independently of the researcher and is therefore tied up with him/her" (Roth and Breuer, 2003:4). Indeed, Baker's (2008) assertion that, on the one hand marketing academics must have practical experience, whilst on the other enjoy the academic freedom to develop new stand-alone theoretical approaches is apposite. Engaging in a project such as this, where subject expertise and previous experience is the bedrock of, and at the same time the inspiration for, the focus of the inquiry, brings into the foreground the researcher's perception and apperception. That is, our interpretation of phenomena is often a product of assimilating one's memory of ideas and experiences, to make sense and meaning, of a new phenomenon: the mental process that we refer to as apperception. It is ironic that in the methodology upon which this inquiry is based – grounded theory - the original authors advocated a research approach without *a priori* knowledge of the phenomenon being investigated. Not only has this since been proven to be unnecessary, but it has come to be viewed as undesirable. Providing the balance between emic and etic, between allowing the participant's voice to be heard alongside one's own, is the essence of interpreting interpretation. In other words, apperception should be a help not a hindrance.

Objective analysis of data – critical thinking – is counter-intuitive in some respects when dealing with a subject in which the researcher has inhabited in one capacity or another. To enhance this ability to have analytic distance from the data in order to develop meaningful theoretical insights, Glaser (1998:164) suggests reading widely in other disciplines. And yet, expertise, experience and enthusiasm for the development and application of marketing has informed a critical perspective underpinning this attempt at examining the dynamics of marketing, challenging its orthodoxy and hopefully changing its delivery. It has been this hybrid (often serendipitous) background and exposure to the mechanics and magic of marketing that has given the author a unique perspective. In taking a critical but experientially empathetic perspective to how marketing knowledge is generated, Tim Ambler's (2009) assertion that "If we are not contrarians, we are not academics" is an inspiration. Whilst this task has been embraced with passion and enthusiasm, it has also been undertaken with a healthy scepticism attempting to throw light on the roots and use of marketing knowledge.

10.5 **Reflexivity**

The following quotation from French poet Paul Claudel (1929) may well best describe approaches to research: "To understand the rose, one person may use geometry and another the butterfly". Measuring dimensions often give great insight into a phenomenon but understanding context and environment can often offer richer data. Interpretation is critical to the process of trying to understand 'meaning'. Reflexivity, particularly in inquiries using an interpretivist, phenomenological or social constructionist approach, requires the conscious awareness of the individual researcher's impact on the research process and its outcomes as "knowledge cannot be separated from the knower" (Steedman, 1991). Knowledge, in other words, is directly linked to the subject that produces that knowledge. Grbich (2004:71) calls it "a process of critical and detached viewing of self and data collection" and requires a conscious attempt to try and be objective. He suggests two reflexive positions: positional reflexivity which is the researcher's position and textual reflexivity which is the research methods. Eraut (1995) suggests that there is a need to engage in "reflection out of the action" and this will resonate throughout the research in this work. Van Manen (1991) draws the distinction between 'retrospective reflection' (past experiences), 'anticipatory reflection' (future) and 'contemporaneous reflection' (situations that allow instant reflection).

Sometimes, ‘bracketing’ individual interpretation helps the research by allowing the researcher to frame personal perspectives of a phenomenon. Social constructionists may reflect on the conditioning and limiting factors of participant’s situation in a culture and how that might inhibit responses. “Research born out of constructionist inquiry do not function as fixed truths but as invitations to new and ever-evolving dialogues and practices” (Gergen and Gergen, 2003:228). Reflection does not make the data invalid but, on the contrary, add to the quality of the research, exposing more about the nature of the phenomenon being examined. Direct experience, and self-reflexivity of that against the extracted data, is not necessarily mutually exclusive. Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009:273) list four levels of reflexivity based on ‘aspect’ or ‘level’ set against the focus of the research. In *Table 10.1 Levels of reflexivity* below, the levels of reflexivity - interaction with empirical material, interpretation, critical interpretation and reflection on text production and language use – are applied to this inquiry.

Qualitative research is, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2011, *op. cit.* p.6), “a set of complex interpretive practices… [embracing] tensions and contradictions, including disputes over its methods and the forms its findings and interpretations take”. Gummesson (2002:325) puts this brilliantly: “Being an interpreter is probably the more common role for the scholar. He or she describes what is already in progress and lifts it conceptually, thus making it explicit, or repositions and reconceptualises the old and known to fit a contemporary context”. This is a

Table 10.1 Levels of reflexivity

Aspect/level	**Focus**	**How this applies to this inquiry**
Interaction with empirical material.	Accounts in interviews, observations of situations and other empirical materials.	The empirical data extracted, analysed and interpreted are all grounded in the experiential evidence of participants set in their respective contexts.
Interpretation.	Underlying meanings.	He localised and socially-constructed individual meaning of participants is the purpose of the grounded

		research approach and focus of the author's engagement with the data.
Critical interpretation.	Ideology, power, social reproduction.	The hegemony of different paradigmatic perspectives projected through the traditional power of the individual epistemological stances of the parties in question are reviewed in the wider context of knowledge production.

Source: Developed from Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009:273)

highly reflexive (Bruce 2007) and active process. Giddens refers to the reflexive nature of knowledge as the 'double hermeneutic', as the very existence of a concept affects the phenomenon it is describing. "Without some degree of reflexivity, any research is blind and without purpose" (Flood, 1999:35). There is what the author calls an implicit 'reflexive reflex' which describes the relationship between the inquirer to the inquiry. Schön's (1983:280) definition of 'reflection-in-action' as "the ability to think what you are doing while you are doing it" is particularly pertinent here. Doing and thinking are complementary.

For me, true reflexive practice is thinking whilst writing. As St. Pierre *op. cit* claims, a great part of any inquiry is "accomplished in the writing because writing *is* thinking, writing *is* analysis, writing *is* indeed a seductive, tangled *method* of discovery". An essential ingredient of any good writing is reiterative reflexivity: the constant re-editing, re-writing, critical reiterative examination of one's own contribution in thought and in execution of ideas. Revisiting the objectives of the research, how an appropriate methodology has been selected, what epistemological assumptions have been made and how this affects the outcomes of the inquiry, is part of that continuous reflectivity. For me, the essence is in the personal presence of the writing within the research findings; as Hackley (1998:12) says, reflexivity is "woven into the text". Bryans, Mavin and Waring (2002) argue that 'epistemic reflexivity' is a

condition of the historical biography and positionality of the researcher. It involves self-knowledge and a sort of metatheoretical examination of presumptions taken-for-granted assumptions (Johnson and Duberley, 2003). On the other hand, 'methodological reflexivity' refers to "what any given text means by reflexivity often depends upon the method it espouses' (Lynch, 2000) and "helps to make the moves within the [research] game better" (Johnson and Duberley, 2003:1284).

Although some of the thoughts and concepts expressed in this thesis have been formed throughout my life as a practitioner, researcher, writer, teacher, student and consumer of marketing, (and some have even made it into publication and dissemination throughout the academy), it is the interaction with, and inspiration of, other academics, some from other disciplines other than marketing, which has provided me with the creative stimulus and professional stamina to engage on such an enormous task. It is, after all, a commitment to a transformative practice; what England *op. cit.* describes as "a process not just a product".

In the qualitative tradition, researchers are encouraged to be conscious of being an integral part of the research process, as well as being aware and receptive to the thoughts of others. Heshusius (1994) referred to this as "participatory consciousness" and Lynch (2000) called it "methodologically self-conscious", where researchers are not separated from the domain(s) in which the data are produced. The nature of a subjective inquiry being what it is, this reflects a holistic epistemology in this thesis, and one where the validity is a question of hermeneutics since a researcher's positionality affects interpretation. Therefore, a key element in this process is reflexivity, necessitating an "immediate, continuing, dynamic and subjective self-awareness" (Finlay, 2003:108) of reiterative questioning.

It is to be hoped that reflexivity has been demonstrated in this inquiry into *the roots and uses of marketing knowledge* and that the author has achieved the requisite amount of marketing bilinguality, interpreting context into text into context, practice into theory into practice. After all, that is exactly what the aim and content of this thesis has been all about!

10.6 **Limitations and implications for future research**

When interpreting the findings of an inquiry, it is useful to re-examine the parameters of research, the instruments used and their applicability to achieving the research aims and objectives, as well as the selection and justification of research participants. Any research study

aiming to generate subjective data on the phenomenon of lived experience is, by its very nature, an interpretivist, phenomenological inquiry. This element of subjectivity, as has been discussed at length above, entails the interpretation of interpretation, a human understanding of other humans. Whilst this makes it a unique socially-contextual perspective, the validity demanded in quantitative research may be questioned here where the subject of investigation is not an external reality but internal perception.

To compensate, the broadest range of influential authors, academics, lecturers, practitioners, students and other agencies representing the major marketing constituencies were interviewed. The essentially *emic* capturing of indigenous meanings of the individuals has been juxtaposed with *etic* generalisations drawn from published theory and empirical evidence. Often, this is seen as contradictory or contaminated by the researcher's experience brought to investigation. Whilst it is, as Charmaz *op. cit.* states, impossible to recreate the experience of the participants of research, the author's experience of these various domains, bilingual theory/practice skill and enthusiasm for the subject provided the insider's touch and a panopticon vision to supplement the "collective wisdom" of heterogenous participants (Marshall *op. cit.*), the "knowledgeable agents" as Goia, Corley and Hamilton *op. cit* refer to them.

This *respondent/ participant validation* - the triangulation of using multiple perspectives - was supplemented (and indeed underpinned) by appropriate and varied qualitative research methods. Berry *op. cit*. suggests this "derived etic" may offer a richer base from which to analyse experiential evidence. The methodological choice of qualitative, multi-method approach, with elements of phenomenology, grounded theory and hermeneutics may appear over-laden with techniques and perspectives. However, these diverse methods have been proven to be complementary, applied with context-specific relevance, providing a comprehensive yet cohesive research strategy. Data were collected in a broad strategy of case analyses, focus groups, in-depth interviews, and questionnaires, within timelines that were both longitudinal and cross-sectional.

Whilst the work is confined to the general production and consumption of marketing theory and practice, the focus has not disregarded the multifarious marketing concepts which contribute to this field. Rather, a general approach – one with meanings grounded in perceptions, 'word usages' and thoughts articulated through marketing discourse (Herder *ibid*) - has allowed a deeper investigation and enhanced understanding of the philosophy, practice

and function of marketing. The model of unification of these two often opposing epistemes - ***Marketing Knowledge Process Model*** – may not be limited to just to marketing.

Skålén and Hackley (2011:1) are persistent champions of the need for 'bottom-up' empirical research into marketing practice; Ardley and Quinn (2014) present an analysis examining the micro-discourses and narratives of marketing actors; whilst Herzog (2016:289) advises that analysis of practitioner discourse "can analyse practices and material realities and help immanent critique overcome its empirical deficits".

10.7 **Final reflection**

Theory often doesn't reflect practice and having a critical perspective on 'received wisdom' can often be healthy and productive. Objective analysis of data – critical thinking – is counter-intuitive in some respects when dealing with a subject in which the researcher has inhabited in one capacity or another. The author's expertise, experience and enthusiasm for the development and application of marketing has informed a critical perspective underpinning this attempt at examining the dynamics of marketing, challenging its orthodoxy and hopefully changing its delivery.

In the late 1970s and early 80s, (when the author was a Marketing Manager for several B2B nee 'Industrial Marketing' companies in the manufacturing sector), the consumer-oriented normative model of marketing applied solely to consumer markets and the demarcation between the 'manufacturing sector' and the 'services sector' was viewed by some with scepticism. Practitioners were practising something slightly different to the textbook marketing model. Business-to-Business, as its very name suggests, is all about networks, relationships, alliances and co-operation as well as competition seemed the order of the day. Furthermore, the sales models of converting prospects into loyal, repeat-purchase customers seemed an obvious but effective way to do business and encourage loyalty through bonded, complicit relationships. Added to this, the key ingredient in this industrial mix was the interaction of people and the line between 'good' and 'service' was becoming more and more blurred. Coincidentally, the likes of Bitner, Berry, Parasuraman, Grönroos, Gummesson *et al* were adamant on getting us all to think outside the 'product paradigm' with an 'interaction/network' approach that applied service logic to all companies in all sectors and laid the early foundations to *relationship* marketing.

It has been this hybrid (often serendipitous) background and exposure to the mechanics and magic of marketing that has given the author a unique perspective. In taking a critical but experientially empathetic perspective to how marketing knowledge is generated, Tim Ambler's (2009) assertion that "If we are not contrarians, we are not academics" is an inspiration. Qualitative research allows researchers to interpret and draw meaning from personal experience (Mason, 2002:1), and that's exactly what the essence of this work is. Whether it is craftsmanship, art or even as detective work (Patton, 2002), this task has been embraced with passion and enthusiasm, it has also been undertaken with a healthy scepticism attempting to throw light on the roots and use of marketing knowledge.

A final note on what has been the real joy of this etic, emic and epic exercise: the writing and the editing. As researchers, writing reflects who we are, helps us articulate our interpretation of the world, convey our individual philosophical position, and is something that we must accept as our modus operandi. Writing is an entirely personal experience. Whilst the conventions of PhD academic prose - writing in the historic present and ***not*** *writing in the first person - are ostensibly to maintain objectivity and uphold academic tradition, in work such as this, in which temporality and contextuality of knowledge is being examined, in which personal experiences are inextricably laced into the overall purpose and content of the narrative, that academic mask has been very difficult to sustain.*

Nonetheless, whilst this journey has been arduous, it has also been joyous!

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